

Turkish foreign minister resigns

ANKARA (AP) — Foreign Minister Muztar Soyas announced his resignation Monday over a dispute with the prime minister on the appointment of his assistant. Mr. Soyas has been at odds with Prime Minister Tansu Ciller on a variety of issues, including the government's handling of security matters that have led to sharp denunciations in the West. Mr. Soyas, 65, a member of the junior coalition partner Social Democrats, had resisted appointing Ms. Ciller's handpicked candidate as his deputy since he was named foreign minister during a cabinet reshuffle in July. It was not immediately clear if his resignation would affect the future of the coalition government. Mr. Soyas' resignation came two days before the National Security Council, a supreme advisory body, was scheduled to discuss the future of a U.S.-led air force helping protect Iraqi Kurds from a Turkish base. A parliament vote is expected next month. Mr. Soyas said in recent interviews that he believed that the allied force should leave. He argued that it was preventing Turkey from controlling events in northern Iraq, where Turkish Kurdish separatists keep bases. It was not immediately clear if Mr. Soyas' resignation was linked with the issue.

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3 killed, Israeli wounded in Lebanon

MARJAYOUN (AP) — Three guerrillas were killed Monday when Israeli helicopters, responding to a mortar attack that wounded one of their soldiers, strafed South Lebanon, security sources said. The violence erupted at 1 p.m. (1100 GMT) when guerrillas fired mortar shells at an Israeli military convoy heading towards an outpost at the Crusader-built Beaufort Castle in an Israeli-occupied enclave, said the sources. The Israeli military command confirmed one soldier was wounded, but gave no other details. The Lebanese security sources said the soldier's injuries were light and he was treated on the spot. Two Israeli helicopter gunships which came to the aid of the convoy repeatedly strafed suspected guerrilla infiltration trails around the villages of Yohmor and Amoun on the edge of the central sector of the Israeli-held border strip. The sources said the bodies of three guerrillas were later spotted in the ravines in a no man's land near the site of the attack.

Weizman to visit Egypt

TEL AVIV (AFP) — President Ezer Weizman will pay the first visit to Egypt by an Israeli head of state when he goes to Cairo on Dec. 19 for two days, officials said Monday. Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, who invited Mr. Weizman, is under Israeli pressure to visit the Jewish state. However, Mr. Mubarak has so far refused to set a date saying the time must be right, despite repeated trips to Cairo by Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

Serial killer killed in prison

MADISON (AP) — Jeffrey Dahmer, who confessed to killing 17 men and boys and cannibalising some of his victims, was attacked in prison and killed Monday. Dahmer was pronounced dead on the way to a hospital with massive head injuries, a spokesman said. Dahmer, 34, was cleaning a recreation area at the Columbia correctional institute when he was attacked. Another inmate also was attacked and hospitalized. Dahmer was convicted in all but one of the 17 sex killings and was serving 16 consecutive life sentences. Arrested in July 1991, Dahmer said he picked up young men and boys at gay bars, shopping malls and other public places, lured them to his apartment and strangled and dismembered them. Skulls and other body parts were found in his apartment. He admitted he had sex with four corpses, and saved the heart of one "to eat later."

Judiciary to probe Lebanon drug case

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanon's prosecutor-general said on Monday he would investigate allegations linking members of parliament, a government minister and the president's son to illegal drug dealing. Deputy Yahya Shamas caused a sensation when he made the allegations last Thursday as parliament voted to strip him of immunity so he could be prosecuted on drug dealing charges. Prosecutor-General Munir Ouaidat said he had received all records of the session in which Mr. Shamas made the accusations. The declarations in parliament are privileged under Lebanese law.

Mock remains foreign minister in Austria

VIENNA (AFP) — Alois Mock, Austria's foreign minister since 1987, will remain in the post under a new government coalition being formed by Chancellor Franz Vranitzky, the conservative People's Party leadership said Monday.

Arafat upbeat on self-rule elections after meeting Peres

BRUSSELS (Agencies) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat said after meeting Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres on Monday he hoped there would soon be elections in the former occupied territories.

"We hope that we will soon be able to (overcome) all of the problems we had so that we have the opportunity to have free elections in all the Palestinian territories," Mr. Arafat told a news conference in Brussels.

"The Israelis understand our need for quick elections, but at the same time we also have to understand the necessity for security," he added.

Flanked by Mr. Peres, who is on a one-day visit to Brussels, Mr. Arafat said free elections spelled stability for his people.

Under the self-rule accord signed between the PLO and Israel in Cairo six months ago, elections were to have taken place in July in the Gaza Strip and Jericho and parts of the West Bank still occupied by Israel.

However, talks got bogged down over the nature and size of the elected assembly

and whether Palestinian groups who reject the self-rule deal should be allowed to stand for office.

Mr. Peres said negotiations had reopened in Brussels over when elections should take place, adding that the talks should not take place publicly.

"Today we have agreed on an agenda. I don't think that we need to negotiate publicly... basically whatever is democratic is acceptable to us," he said.

"We intend to negotiate with our Palestinian partners very seriously," he added.

A senior Israeli official said Israel was ready to agree to direct elections for a Palestinian leader and grant wider powers to the legislative council in return for concessions on a military redeployment on the West Bank.

"The idea is that we give them more on sovereignty, and they give us more on security," said the official.

On wider legislative powers, he said: "We will probably agree to it. We will probably agree because we have to negotiate something, given our difficulties to redeploy."

According to the Israeli official, Israeli and Palesti-

nian delegations were to follow up the meeting with negotiations on the military pullout from built-up areas on the West Bank.

The 1993 declaration of principles for autonomy calls for the election of a legislative council but leaves its powers to be negotiated in an interim accord.

Israel has not met its commitment to pull out of Palestinian population centres before the vote and has voiced growing concern for the safety of thousands of Jewish settlers on the West Bank if a redeployment goes ahead.

Talk of Israeli "concessions" was rejected by Palestinian official Zahira Kamal.

"Direct elections of the head of the autonomy council at the same time as the council is not one of our demands. It's part of our election system."

"The elections are an internal thing for the Palestinians."

After their joint meeting Mr. Peres and Arafat met with foreign ministers from the European troika — the current, last and next presi-

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Hamas vows its activists will not lay down arms

GAZA CITY (Agencies) — Hamas members will never lay down their weapons as long as the Israeli occupation continues, a leader of the group said in an interview published Monday.

Mahmoud Zahar told Al Quds newspaper Hamas, or the Islamic Resistance Movement, would no longer hold armed demonstrations in the autonomous areas, as agreed with Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat's self-rule authority.

But he added: "It must be clear that as long as an inch of Palestinian land remains occupied, it is a crime to talk about disarming or to disarm any Palestinian under any pretext."

The interview was not available to Gaza residents for most of the day as Palestinian police seized all newspapers for about six hours after allegedly biased reports of an Islamic rally held here on Saturday.

Dr. Zahar also disputed a claim by Mr. Arafat that a

turnout of at least 10,000 people at a rally in support of the PLO chairman last week reflected public approval of the autonomy agreement.

The Hamas leader said the figure was not large enough, and the rally had been "demanded by Mr. Arafat and organised by Fateh."

"It can be considered a withdrawal of confidence in the Palestinian authority and in Fateh," he countered.

The group is vehemently opposed to the PLO's autonomy deal with Israel, and has vowed to continue fighting the Jewish state.

Asked what alternatives there were to the autonomy deal, Dr. Zahar highlighted conditions set by Hamas in 1988.

These included an Israeli withdrawal from all Palestinian lands, occupied by Israel in the 1967 Middle East war, including Jerusalem, which should be placed under international or Arab protection.

Other conditions call for Palestinians to be able to elect or choose their leader

without Israeli interference. The leader should have the right to negotiate any Palestinian issue with no limits, unlike the autonomy deal, Dr. Zahar said.

He said the Hamas proposal would have to meet Palestinian "political and religious demands," as well as regional Arab and international conditions.

Palestinian reporters said the newspapers carrying news of Saturday's rally when they were delivered to their distributors — Al Quds, Al Nahar, the Jerusalem Post and the weekly Al Manar — are published in Jerusalem.

Palestinian sources said Mr. Arafat issued the ban Monday before leaving for Brussels for three days of negotiations with Israel and the international donors.

Glazi Jabali, the Gaza police chief, hung up the phone when asked the reason for the ban, the AP reported.

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Fear of 'Ain Al Hilweh fighting eases, but stalemate persists

SIDON (Agencies) — Palestinian dissidents backed down Monday from an ultimatum to Yasser Arafat's loyalists to surrender their positions in Lebanon's biggest refugee camp or face an all-out war.

Dissident leader Lieutenant-Colonel Munir Maqdash said he still insisted that Mr. Arafat's men surrendered the last five centres they held in the sprawling shantytown of 'Ain Al Hilweh, although he dropped a deadline to evict them by force.

The deadline, which was extended twice in less than 12 hours, expired at 10 a.m. (0800 GMT) without a surrender from Mr. Arafat's mainstream Fateh faction, and with no attack by Col. Maqdash's forces.

Aides close to Col. Maqdash said he told senior assistants he was under pressure from Syria and Islamic fundamentalists opposed to the Arab-Israeli peace talks to stamp out Mr. Arafat's hardcore guerrillas.

His assistants, however,

bluntly told him they would not go along with an attack on loyalists because it was bound to trigger a bloodbath, said the aides.

They explained that Mr. Arafat's estimated 150 to 200 loyalists trapped in the northern section of 'Ain Al Hilweh with their backs to the Lebanese army included at least 80 wanted by the Syrian and Lebanese authorities.

That would mean these men would fight unto death if attacked, because all of them preferred to die rather than be taken to Lebanese or Syrian jails to face charges of murder, mutiny and robbery, the aides said.

They said Col. Maqdash also was told that if he eliminated Fateh from the camp Mr. Arafat would definitely stop his \$450,000 monthly stipend to 'Ain Al Hilweh's 60,000 Palestinians, with no one else to compensate them.

Faced with this opposition from within, Col. Maqdash agreed to drop the deadline for military action and asked his objecting assistants to find another way to get Fateh's

positions under his control peacefully.

The head of Fateh militia in Lebanon said meanwhile he tendered his resignation after last week's inter-Palestinian clashes but his request was turned down.

Lt.-Col. Khaled Al Shayeb said he decided to "freeze his military duties" after Fateh's general director in Lebanon Colonel Sultan Abu Al Ainn refused his request on Sunday.

"Sultan refused my request and said he hoped I continue my duties but I said I will not interfere in military matters," Col. Shayeb told Reuters in 'Ain Al Hilweh.

Col. Shayeb did not say why he tendered his resignation but he was quoted by Beirut newspapers as saying "the situation in the camp is explosive. Those who started the fighting (on Friday) remain in the camp."

Col. Shayeb said the clashes were sparked by a power struggle within the ranks of Fateh. Anti-Arafat

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QATARI OFFICIAL HONOURED: His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad, the Regent, Monday confers Al Kawthar Medal of the First Order upon visiting head of the Qatari General Commission on Youth and Sports Sheikh Mohammad Ben Eld Al Thani. Attending the meeting were Youth Minister Fawwaz Abdul Ghanam and Qatari Ambassador to Jordan Nasser Abdul Aziz (see page 3) (Petra photo)

EU lifts arms embargo on Syria

BRUSSELS (Agencies) — The European Union (EU) on Monday lifted its eight-year-old embargo on arms sales to Syria, British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd said.

A meeting of EU foreign ministers unanimously agreed to lift the embargo imposed in 1986 after an Arab was convicted in Britain of attempting to plant a bomb on an Israeli airline at London's Heathrow airport.

The British government said at the time it had proof that Syrian diplomats were involved in the attempted attack, in April 1986, which Damascus has always denied.

Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa was due to meet later with his EU counterparts in Brussels for the

first such talks since 1977. "Syria has always called for an effective European role in the Middle East peace process, while Israel has opposed it by sidelining Europe," said the Syrian government daily Tishrin.

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres on Monday criticised the lifting of the arms embargo after talks with Mr. Hurd before the announcement.

"Let them move (towards peace) and then maybe there won't be any need for an arms embargo," he said of the Syrians.

But Tishrin accused Israel of trying to undermine its relations with the EU. "The Zionist lobby has launched an unfair campaign

against Syria aimed at sabotaging relations with Europe which have been characterised by fruitful and honest cooperation for a long time," the paper said.

The EU has also lifted other sanctions, such as bans on low-level diplomatic meetings, between 1987 and 1990, when Syria sided with the West in the Gulf war.

EU-Syrian relations have improved recently along with the Mideast peace accords between Israel, the Palestine Liberation Organisation and Jordan.

Diplomats said Mr. Sharaa was to discuss how to promote economic cooperation between Syria and the EU and the resumption of financial aid to Damascus within meetings

here Monday.

Syrian officials hailed the EU meeting.

"Syria has always been calling for a greater European role in the Middle East and we hope today's meeting would contribute in furthering the Syrian-European relations," one official spokesman said.

"Europe with its deep-rooted historical links with the Middle East and its location close to the region is qualified to play a greater role and Syria welcomes the European moves in this respect," he said.

The director-general of Israel's foreign ministry on Sunday asked the EU to re-

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GCC signs security pact without Qatar

RIYADH (Agencies) — The Gulf Arab monarchies, apart from Qatar and Kuwait, signed an accord to draw up a joint security strategy in the Saudi capital on Monday that has been under discussion for the last decade.

The interior ministers of Bahrain, Oman, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) sealed the accord designed to guarantee their collective security at the end of a two-day meeting.

Qatar boycotted the meeting to protest alleged Saudi attacks on its shipping in a disputed border region.

Kuwait, the other member of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), did not sign the accord for "legislative reasons," said the emirate's interior minister Ali Salem Al Sabah.

He said Kuwait was not opposed to the accord, which would apparently be submitted to parliament first.

The Saudi interior minister, Prince Nayef Ben Abdul Aziz, said when the meeting opened that he regretted Qatar's absence but it also was not opposed to the accord, which has been under consideration since 1984.

Doha had warned of a boycott after complaining about "five attacks in the last two years when the Saudi coast guard had opened fire, arrested and detained Qatari sailors at Khor Al Adaid," a Gulf official said.

Khor Al Adaid is a waterway to the Gulf in a border region disputed by Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

Qatar had vowed to stay away from the GCC meeting if Riyadh failed to answer questions in a protest letter about the attacks, the official added on condition of anonymity.

Qatar and Saudi Arabia have been locked in a border dispute since 1965, but there was new tension in 1992 when the Saudi army occupied a border post at Khafus in southeast Qatar.

The London-based Arabic daily Al Hayat reported that GCC Secretary General Fahim Al Qassimi had spent two days in Qatar prior to the meeting trying to bring the leadership to change its mind.

The GCC was born in 1981 as a collective economic and security alliance with the aim of gradual movement towards integration.

But border disputes still mar the relations of some of its member states.

Aside from its feud with Saudi Arabia over border territory claimed by both sides, Qatar also is locked in a dispute with Bahrain over water boundaries.

Most of the disputes erupted after Britain ended its colonial rule in the early 1970s, leaving poorly marked borders separating Gulf states.

The Qatar-Saudi dispute flared into a brief shootout in September 1992, but the confrontation was quickly contained following Egyptian mediation.

Details of Monday's accord, which will be submitted to a GCC summit conference in Bahrain Dec. 19, have not been released.

But the Saudi interior minister told reporters that it provides for the extradition of any fugitive wanted by another GCC country, irrespective of his or her nationality.

Prince Nayef also said that the agreement was "multifaceted" and aims to protect GCC nationals from hostile "intellectual" influences and threats to their well-being and wealth.

He was alluding to Islamic extremists trying to spread their influence in the conservative GCC states as well as to drug traffickers and swindlers.

Prince Nayef said the GCC countries hoped to play a prominent role in combating international crime.

Jordanian students in Haifa; tourists visit Eilat

HAIFA (Agencies) — Elementary school students and business people from Jordan crossed into Israel Monday, the first such tourists since the two countries signed a peace treaty.

"This is a very beautiful thing. I feel as if I came to my country, to my brothers and my family," said Khalil Hadad, a 12-year-old from Amman.

Hadad and 13 other elementary school students arrived in the northern port city of Haifa at the invitation of the organisers of a culture festival marking the eight-day Jewish holiday of Hanukkah, which began Sunday.

The festival's theme is the Israeli-Jordanian peace treaty, and later Monday the children were to take the stage and join Israeli artists in a rendition of "I believe," an Israeli peace song written for the occasion.

Odette Dahlo, one of the Jordanian escorts of the group, said most Jordanians support peace with Israel. "I don't believe there will be problems with the extremists," she said.

Earlier Monday, the children were met at the Jordan River Bridge border crossing by a group of Jewish and Arab children from Haifa who sang peace songs. Haifa is one of only a few mixed Jewish-Arab towns in Israel

and seen as a successful example of coexistence.

Israeli pop singer Riki Gal, attending a reception for the Jordanian guests at a Haifa hotel, said she was very moved by the budding exchange. "Music never had frontiers. Until now, I didn't sing in Arabic, but perhaps now I will try. And if not I, perhaps my little daughter who is three will," Mr. Gal said.

Earlier Monday, 10 Jordanian tourists, most of them business people, crossed the southern Wadi Araba border post into Israel's Red Sea resort city of Eilat, where they will stay for two days.

They met with Mayor Gabi Kadoush, visited the underwater observatory and the dolphin show.

"Since the peace treaty was signed with Jordan we have put pressure on the Jordanians to form a first group of tourists," said Jonathan Lann, head of Johnny Tours travel agency.

"They finally agreed to our proposal," he said.

The group of doctors, businessmen and tour agents, one a woman, "came to see as much as to do business with Israelis," said Mr. Lann who met the 10 at the Israeli side of the border, which was opened in August but at first

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ANNOUNCEMENT

The Investment Promotion Department announces that its One-Stop Shop will receive all applications for investment in Jordan as of January 1st, 1994. The One-Stop Shop will process all applications and follow them through in lieu of the investors through the representatives of investment related ministries, departments and private and public sector agencies.

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هولندا من الأصل

Jordanian team holds talks on trade in Iraq

BAGHDAD (J.T.) — A team of Jordanian businessmen met here Monday with Iraqi Health Minister Osama Mubarak and presented him badly needed drugs for patients suffering from diabetes, heart conditions and kidney ailments.

The delegation, which arrived Sunday in Baghdad to discuss trade with the Iraqi government, said that the gift was from the Jordanian people and a token of Jordan's support for the Iraqi's steadfastness in the face of the four-year international sanctions against Iraq.

Dr. Mubarak thanked the delegation, which is led by Jordan Businessmen Association (JBA) Chairman Hamdi Tabbaa, expressing Iraqi appreciation of the Jordanian aid. The Iraqis deeply thank the Jordanian institutions that have been providing assistance to Iraq, he said.

Dr. Mubarak said Iraqi hospitals face acute shortages of vital medicines and medical equipment. The shortages have been directly responsible for deaths and the outbreak of contagious diseases, he said.

Mr. Tabbaa and his team met Monday with Dr. Abdul Qader Abdul Rahman, ministry of industry secretary

general, to hear about Iraq's industrial programmes and plans for bolstering industrial ties with Jordan.

Mr. Tabbaa expressed readiness to accept Iraqi proposals for Iraqi Jordanian cooperation in industrial affairs.

The delegation also met Adnan Al Qudsi, chairman of the Iraqi Federation of Industries, and discussed cooperation in industry and the exchange of expertise.

Mr. Tabbaa said the JBA was ready to launch cooperation with Iraq in investment projects and in promoting trade exchanges.

He discussed prospects for private sector projects and laws that could be introduced to encourage foreign investment in Iraq.

The delegation also met Ministry of Industry and Trade officials to discuss business deals with Iraq.

Iraq remains Jordan's biggest trade partner and it still gets most of its unauthorised imports like food and medicine via the port of Aqaba.

The JBA delegation, which ends its visit Wednesday, toured Iraqi projects and visited the Ameriyeh shelter which was bombed by the allies during the Gulf war.

Funding cuts slash U.N. guards in Iraq

BAGHDAD (R) — Funding shortages have forced the U.N. to slash the number of guards deployed mostly in Kurdish northern Iraq by two thirds of just over 100, a U.N. official said on Monday.

"The number of guards is diminishing because of lack of resources. It is now one third of our established target of 300," U.N. coordinator Mohammad Zejjani said.

"If we do not get the funds, we will have to reduce them again by the end of the year," he told Reuters.

At their peak there were more than 500 guards but Mr. Zejjani said there are now only eight in Baghdad and 96 in northern Iraq.

The multi-national guard force, including Filipinos, Swedes, and Danes, was sent to Iraq after the 1991 Gulf war to look after U.N. offices and relief convoys.

Decisions by major Western donors to send aid funds elsewhere have forced cutbacks in several aid programmes in northern Iraq, including the guard force.

The guards' presence was seen as reassuring millions of dissident Kurds who fled to

mountains along the Turkish and Iranian borders following the collapse of a brief post-Gulf war uprising against President Saddam Hussein's government.

But the force has always been a thorn in the side of Baghdad, which accuses them of being spies. Guards were targets of assassination attempts and one from Fiji was shot dead last year as he slept in his bed in the northern town of Dohuk. Several others were injured.

The collapse of the U.N. relief programme in Iraq, which is mainly aimed at serving rebel Kurds in the north, is certain to be viewed as a triumph by Baghdad which has been charging the U.N. of politicising its presence in the country.

Rebel Kurds, under Western protection, run most of Iraqi Kurdistan. They elected a parliament and set up a regional government in 1992, but fighting among rival Kurdish groups has paralysed their administration.

Baghdad has severed all ties with them and they are now entirely dependent on U.N. relief.

Palestinians fall victim to cut in Israeli medical aid

GAZA CITY (AFP) — A nine-month-old baby, Ahmad Abu Shamak, struggles to breathe with the aid of oxygen equipment in the Nasser Children's Hospital in Gaza City, while doctors wait impatiently for him to undergo a life-saving operation abroad.

"We cannot operate on this baby here. He is suffering from a congenital heart complaint," says Dr. Sami Abu Delfa, head of the hospital's cardiology unit.

The baby will be sent to a hospital in Cairo once his father has obtained the necessary papers. "This could take a month and I'm



LUKY BUT SECRETIVE: Wearing a paper bag to hide his identity and in possession of a check for more than \$1.5 million, one of four winners of last week's Israeli lottery of 19 million shekels (\$6.3 million) Monday leaves the Israeli

state-owned "Mifal Hapais" in Tel Aviv. The company runs most of the legal gambling in the country and uses the considerable profits to build schools and sport facilities around the country (AFP photo)

Embargo creates new breed of Iraqi billionaires

BAGHDAD (AFP) — A new breed of billionaires has sprung up in Iraq, thanks to the four-year international embargo on their country which has allowed them to swindle naive investors.

Sami Hassan Kadhem, a 34-year-old hairdresser, set up a bogus company called SAM-CO which made him 1.3 billion dinars (\$2.36 million).

He is one of three "billionaires" arrested recently by Iraqi police and paraded on television here Saturday in a programme on the new phenomenon which is hitting the Iraqi economy.

Many young people like Sami, looking to get rich quick, have set up bogus investment companies offering incredible interest rates of up to 100 per cent.

They have found their victims among various sections of a society where people often cannot afford to buy consumer goods and are anxious to invest their savings before they are made worth-

less by runaway inflation, according to press reports.

The economy has been crippled by the United Nations embargo imposed on Iraq following its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

No estimates have been given on the number of people who have fallen victim to these fictitious companies.

To lure their clients into a false sense of security, the common pay out the promised monthly interest using deposits from the ever-increasing number of new "shareholders" in their companies.

Sami explained that with an initial capital of 800 dinars, he was able to make his fortune by pretending to be a representative of car tyre and battery companies.

He offered potential investors a monthly interest rate of 75 per cent. SAM-CO, which did not even have a headquarters, ended up with 161 agents working in cafes or visiting people's homes.

Meanwhile, a former high school pupil, 23-year-old Alaa Salman, set up his own property company and made one billion dinars (\$1.8 million) in five months by dazzling investors with a 100 per cent interest rate.

His cousin Nihad, 19, a deserter from the Iraqi army, offered his victims a 70 per cent rate for deposits in his bogus tobacco distribution company, according to Iraqi television.

The television showed pictures of huge sacks full of Iraqi notes, seized from the homes of the three common and their accomplices who said they "never had anything to do with banks."

Earlier this month the Babel newspaper, run by President Saddam Hussein's son Uday, said there were 150 investment companies which were "mostly bogus."

On Sunday the daily blasted the authorities for their slowness in cracking down on the swindlers, which

Thai ex-police chief cleared of Saudi gems kidnap charges

BANGKOK (AFP) — Thailand's former top policeman was cleared Monday of charges that he ordered the kidnapping of relatives of a gem dealer called to testify in a case involving valuable jewelry stolen in Saudi Arabia and which disappeared after being recovered by Thai police.

Former police chief Pratin Santirabpol was cleared of ordering the kidnap of the gem-dealer's wife and son, who were later murdered. Thailand's supreme attorney general rule Monday.

Khanit Na Nakorn said witnesses who named Mr. Pratin in connection with the kidnapping for Darawadee Srihanakan and her 14-year-old son Seri gave conflicting testimony leaving "insufficient grounds" for prosecution.

The magistrate also cleared police Lieutenant General Sopphon Sawikamin, one of

and Singaporean jewelry dealers, including Santi.

Mr. Santi is expected to provide evidence against the 10 men who are now to stand trial in the case.

Ironically, it was the confession letter of Mr. Pratin's assistant Sopphon, printed in local papers, which triggered an investigation into the former police chief.

Mr. Sopphon claimed in his open letter to the prime minister that Mr. Pratin, while still in office, had unofficially ordered him and another senior police official to "go get" Darawadee so that they could force her husband to reveal the location of some of the Saudi jewelry.

Though Mr. Sopphon was named by several witnesses as having been present during the murder, and though he admitted that he knew about the crime as it was taking place, Mr. Sopphon and his colleague Lieutenant-Gener-

NEWS IN BRIEF

Sugar cane to be harvested early in Egypt

MINYA (AFP) — Egyptian authorities have ordered sugar producers in the troubled southern province of Minya to harvest their crops earlier than usual in a bid to prevent militants hiding in sugar cane fields, security officials said.

Under an agreement reached between security officials, Minya provincial leaders and heads of sugar processing factories, the sugar cane harvest will start on Dec. 3 rather than at the end of the month, the officials said. Militants have been using the 33,000 hectares of crops as a hideout after carrying out attacks in the province, which lies about 240 kilometres south of Cairo. Most militant attacks have taken place in Minya since police launched a crackdown in August on the militant stronghold of Assiut, further south. Security officials agreed with sugar producers that new crops would be planted at least 50 metres away from roads, to help police catch militants attempting to flee into the sugar cane fields. Security officials promised to compensate farmers whose crops were damaged during recent searches for militants.

Kuwait to charge expatriates for medical services

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — The Kuwaiti Health Ministry is to start charging expatriates for various medical services but emergency and preventive health care will remain free, the health minister said, Abdul Rahman Al Muhallan, quoted by newspapers, did not specify the size of charges or when they will be imposed. According to earlier press reports, the Kuwaiti council of ministers is to study next month the issue of imposing charges on certain public services including health care. The Health Ministry has provided most medical services free of charge since Kuwait's independence in the early 1960s. Mr. Muhallan has submitted a study on charges to be reviewed by the council of ministers, which says Kuwaitis will be exempted from paying fees except in limited cases. In April 1993 the Health Ministry started levying limited charges on certain medical services for expatriates only, including radiology services. "The purpose of levying the charges was to rationalise expenditure and stop abuse of drugs which have been provided free of charge so far," the minister said.

King Fahd receives message from Mubarak

RIYADH (AFP) — Saudi King Fahd on Sunday received a message from Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak on bilateral ties and the situation in the Middle East, officials said here. The message was conveyed by Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa, who arrived here Sunday for a visit lasting several hours. Mr. Musa held talks with his Saudi counterpart Prince Saud Al Faisal on "issues of joint interest and the current Arab and international situation." In Cairo, the Egyptian Foreign Ministry said Mr. Musa was also to brief King Fahd on the results of Mr. Mubarak's recent visit to Europe, which took him to Britain, Italy and Romania.

Kuwait to write off Egyptian, Syrian debts

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — The Kuwaiti parliament agreed Sunday to write off Egyptian and Syrian debts worth some \$2.93 billion. The official Kuwaiti news agency KUNA said. Egypt's debt to the emirate stood at \$2.8 billion and Syria's at \$126 million. The finance and economy committee of the Kuwaiti parliament gave its approval after the government submitted a bill to cancel the debts in September. Egypt and Syria provided the largest Arab contingents in the U.S.-led multinational coalition that liberated Kuwait in February 1991, ending a seven-month Iraqi occupation. The government bill also proposed cancelling the interest on debts incurred by eight developing countries, including Chad, Morocco, Pakistan, Senegal, Somalia and Zambia.

Snow cuts off 3,200 villages in Turkey

ANKARA (R) — Blizzards have isolated 3,200 villages and forced schools closed in eastern Turkey. Weather officials said on Monday that snow had piled up over a metre in the provinces of Erzurum, Agri, Kars, Mus, Bingol and Ardahan. In Van, Hakkari and Bitlis provinces, hundreds of villages were cut off, the officials told. Anatolian news agency, Erzurum provincial authorities ordered all schools closed. Nine secondary roads connecting regional towns were blocked. Intercity highways were open but ice made traffic flow difficult. Forty five teams were working to keep roads open but some village roads could be closed for a month. Storms tumbled utility poles in the southeastern province of Hakkari, cutting off power to the town of Semdinli.

Sudan appoints rebel defectors to council

KHARTOUM (R) — Sudan's Lieutenant General Omar Hassan Al Bashir has appointed seven more people, including three defectors from the rebel Sudan Peoples Liberation Army (SPLA), to a special peace council. SUNA news agency said. The Higher Council for Peace, tasked with pursuing peace talks with the southern SPLA rebels, was set up by decree in September with 88 members. 40 from the south. SUNA said the newly appointed seven members included three southern Sudanese, two members of the Nuba tribe in southern Kordofan, and two northern Sudanese. The three southern Sudanese were recent prominent defectors from the SPLA, the news agency said. It named them as Simon Mori Didimo, Paul Anade, and John Kulang.

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel. 773111-19	
PROGRAMME TWO	
17:00	Allice Au Pays Des Merveilles
17:30	Un Four Trois
18:00	Entertainment Plus
18:30	Le Vent Des Merveilles
19:00	News in French
19:30	Varities
19:50	F.B.I. The United States
20:00	World Echo
20:30	Quantum Leap
21:00	Cracking The Code
22:00	News in English
22:30	The House of Eliot
23:10	Fly By Night
PRAYER TIMES	
04:50	Fajr
06:11	Sunrise (Shamir) Dhuhr
11:23	Dhuhr
14:13	Asr
16:37	Maghrib
17:58	Isha
CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church, Sweith, Tel. 810744	
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 637885	
St. Joseph Church, Tel. 624500	
Church of the Annunciation, Tel. 637440	
De la Salle Church, Tel. 601757	
Terrasanta Church, Tel. 623306	
Church of the Annunciation, Tel. 625541	
Anglican Church, Tel. 638551, Tel. 628543	
Armenian Catholic Church, Tel. 771331	
Armenian Orthodox Church, Tel. 775281	
St. Ephraim Church, Tel. 771751	
Armenian International Church, Tel. 625250	
Evangelical Lutheran Church, Tel. 624328	
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation, Tel. 604195	
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, Tel. 624932	
Church of Nazareth, Tel. 675601	
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman, Tel. 811295	

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR	
Amman 13, Aqaba 23. Humidity readings: Amman 40 per cent, Aqaba 40 per cent.	
USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS	
NIGHT DUTY	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Mukhlis Halesi	819229
Dr. Shaban Al Izzi	733774
Dr. Shafiq Abu Zayed	737462
Dr. Khalil Tsiul	615715
Firas pharmacy	601912
Furukh pharmacy	770336
Al Aswa pharmacy	637055
Nairukh pharmacy	623672
Al Salam pharmacy	636730
Yasuni pharmacy	644945
Shoukri pharmacy	637041
Nairukh pharmacy	623672
Najih pharmacy	847632
IRBID:	
Dr. Ahmad Qani	(-)
Alqub pharmacy	(-)
ZARQA:	
Dr. Randa Shalin	905710
Khalil pharmacy	905417
EMERGENCIES	
Food Control Centre	637111
Civil Defence Department	601111
Rescue	630341
Civil Defence Emergency	199
Fire Brigade	192, 621111, 637777
Police	617101
Blood Bank	774121
Highway Police	634302
Traffic Police	606501
Public Security Department	630321
Hotel Complaints	615531
Price Complaints	601176
Water and Sewerage	607467
Amman Municipality	
Complaints	787101
Telephone Information	(directory assistance)
Director's assistance	121
Overseas Calls	774111
Central Amman Telephone	610230
Repairs	623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs	601101
Jordan Television	773111
Radi Jordan	774111
Water Authority	600100
Electricity Authority	615615
Company	636381
RJ Flight Information	18-53200
HOSPITALS	
Queen Alia Intl. Airport	18-53200
AMMAN:	
Hussein Medical Centre	81381332
Khalil Maternity, J. Amn	64281-6
Akileh Maternity, J. Amn	62441-2
Jabal Amman Maternity	642362
Malhas, J. Amman	636140
Palestine, Shamsani	1641714
Shamsani Hospital	609131
University Hospital	345845
Al-Muasher Hospital	607257-9
The Islamic, Abdali	600127-37
Al-Ahli, Abdali	604164-6
Italian, Al-Muhallan	777101-3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashraf	775111-26
Army, Marka	705111-15
Queen Alia Hospital	600100
Amal Hospital	674155
ZARQA:	
Zarqa Govt. Hospital	(09)863323
Zarqa National Hospital	(09)861561
Ibn Sina Hospital	(09)867332
Al Hilu Modern Hospital	(09)866001
IRBID:	
Princess Basma Hospital	(02)755555
Greek Catholic Hospital	(02)722753
Ibn Al Nafies Hospital	(02)257701

HJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN	
Dep. Amman	5:00 m every Monday
Dep. Damascus	5:00 m every Monday
Dep. Amman	5:00 m every Sunday
Dep. Amman	5:00 m every Sunday
MARKET PRICES	
Upper lower price in /tk per kg.	
Apple	200-300
Banana	600
Banana (Mukammir)	620
Cabbage	300-200
Carrot	150-200
Cauliflower	350-200
Cucumber	200-200
Cucumbers (large)	150-100
Cucumbers (small)	350-200
Eggplant	220-160
Garlic	600-500
Lemon	200-200
Marrow (large)	140-100
Marrow (small)	340-180
Onion (green)	600-500
Onion (dry)	200-180
Orange	320-200
Pepper (hot)	350-200
Pepper (sweet)	300-200
Potato	310-150
Spinach	300-150
Tomato	500-300



Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Monday meeting were Youth Minister Fawwaz Abul Ghanam and Qatari Ambassador to Jordan Nasser Abdul Aziz (right) (Petra photo)

Regent reviews youth fields with visiting Qatari official

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad, the Regent, Monday received at Al Manal Palace the visiting head of the Qatari General Commission on Youth and Sports, Sheikh Mohammad Ben Eid Al Thani, and his accompanying delegation.

Prince Mohammad and the Qatari sheikh reviewed Jordanian-Qatari relations in sports and youth fields and duties assigned to the youth ministries in both countries.

The Regent stressed the need to enhance bilateral cooperation in these areas and called for exchanging youth delegations.

He also asked Sheikh Mohammad to convey the greetings of His Majesty King Hussein, who is currently on a visit to the United Kingdom, to the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Khalifa Bin Hamad Al Thani, and Qatari Crown Prince Sheikh Hamad Ben Khalifa Al Thani.

Prince Mohammad conferred upon the visiting sheikh Al Kawab Medal of the First Order and other high medals on the members of the Qatari accompanying delegation.

The meeting was attended by Youth Minister Fawwaz Abul Ghanam and Qatari Ambassador in Amman Nasser Abdul Aziz.

Later Monday, the two sides signed a draft agreement on cooperation between the Kingdom and Qatar in sports and youth fields.

The memorandum was signed on the Jordanian side by Mr. Abul Ghanam and on the Qatari side by Sheikh Mohammad.

The two parties agreed that the final version of the agreement will be signed during Mr. Abul Ghanam's coming visit to Qatar.

The date for the minister's visit will be decided later.

Also Monday, the Qatari delegation was received by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali.

Dr. Majali commended Jordanian-Qatari relations and wished the visiting delegation success in its mission in Jordan.

The premier said Jordan views interaction between the youth in sports areas as one of the best means to enhance solidarity.

Sheikh Mohammad voiced satisfaction with Jordanian-Qatari relations.

Later, the delegation met with Deputy Prime Minister Thouqan Hindawi for talks on means of enhancing bilateral ties.

In a statement to the press after the meeting, Sheikh Mohammad said he discussed with Dr. Majali and Mr. Hindawi issues of concern to youth and sports movements in both countries as well as bilateral relations.



AWARDING GRADUATES: Her Royal Highness Princess Alia Bint Al Hussein, the honorary president of the Rural Women's Development and Training Society, Monday distributes diplomas to women who finished dressmaking and tricot courses organised by the society. The graduation ceremony, held at the Royal Cultural Centre (RCC), was organised by the society as part of its celebrations of His Majesty King Hussein's birthday. Princess Alia distributed diplomas to 45 graduates and awarded certificates of appreciation to excellent trainees and supporters of the society's activities. On the occasion, a tricot and knit-wear exhibition was held at the RCC. The society was founded in 1990 with the objective of training rural women and preserving rural and bedouin heritage. It also aims to help the needy and reduce demographic movement from rural and desert areas to urban centres (Petra photo)

Jordan, Lebanon to settle trade issues in Beirut

BEIRUT (J.T.) — A Jordanian agricultural delegation Monday arrived in Beirut for talks on settling exchanges of agricultural products between Lebanon and Jordan and ways to overcome obstacles to the transportation of products, according to Ministry of Agriculture Secretary General Ghaleb Abu Orrabi.

Mr. Abu Orrabi told the Jordan Times that the delegation, which is led by Minister of Agriculture Mansour Ben Tarif and includes Salem Rawzi, director of the Agricultural Marketing Organisation (AMO) as well as merchants and leading farmers, is expected to sign a protocol on agricultural exchanges at the end of the meetings on Thursday.

Depending on the season, Jordan and Lebanon have been exchanging agricultural

products including melons, apricots, apples, cherries and tomatoes, but the exchange has often been bogged down because of the lack of proper bilateral exchange agreements. Mr. Abu Orrabi said.

He said the talks between the 10-member Jordanian delegation which includes Rakan Al Faour, head of the Jordan Valley Farmers Association (JVFA), were expected to be conducted mainly with the Lebanese private sector which usually handles agricultural matters, as well as Lebanese Minister of Agriculture Adel Qartas.

Mr. Ben Tarif said upon arrival in Beirut Monday that the visit at the invitation of the Lebanese government aimed at settling trade between the two sides.

Lebanese and Jordanian officials in charge of agri-

cultural production are eager to increase production and ensure fair exchanges among Arab states to provide food security, said Mr. Ben Tarif.

He said that Jordan was keen on ensuring the flow of agricultural products among Arab states and was careful in concluding economic and trade agreements to achieve that goal and facilitate the flow of trade between Amman and Beirut.

The Lebanese minister said the Jordanian delegation's visit was in the course of coordination between the two countries in matters related to agricultural exchanges.

He said the two sides plan to sign an agreement providing for continued exchanges and solutions to problems such as those encountered in the past.

'Raising the number of civil servants will not solve unemployment, poverty'

Premier discusses governorate issues in Madaba

MADABA (Petra) — The government can by no means solve the unemployment and poverty problems by appointing more people to serve in its public administration system because such a practice could only further inflate the system and render it obsolete, said Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Monday.

Speaking during a visit to Madaba Governorate, Dr. Majali said unemployment and poverty can only be solved by increasing investments in productive projects, which can take place in a climate marked by stability, security and peace.

By signing the peace treaty with Israel the country has entered a new phase requiring readiness to change, ability to become more competitive and preparations to cut on routine, said Dr. Majali.

The prime minister, who was replying to questions put to him at a meeting with members of the local executive council and deputies from the Madaba district, said that the new 1995 draft budget is considered ambitious enough to help the country carry out productive schemes and offer better services to the public.



Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Monday attends a meeting of the Madaba Executive Council. Also attending the meeting were Minister of Interior Salameh Hammad and Madaba deputies Abdul Hafez Shakhaneh, Abdul Majid Aqtash and Samih Farah (Petra photo)

Referring to the work of the executive council, Dr. Majali said the council should take charge of local issues such as school building requirements and stimulating the role of youth activities as well as promoting agricultural projects.

At the meeting, which was attended by Interior Minister Salameh Hammad, the prime minister said the application of a decentralised system in the country should enable governors to handle local projects and take charge of matters related to their communities and facilitate some of the routine requirements faced by residents, saving them the trouble of seeking solutions from the central government in Amman.

Asked about Jordan's relations with the Gulf states, the

prime minister, who recently visited Qatar and plans to go to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) soon, said that relations are progressively improving and returning to normal.

Jordan, the prime minister said, has been continually seeking to end differences among Arab states and looks forward to joint and collective action in the face of the challenges of peace.

Abdul Qader Hababeh, the Madaba governor, presented an outline of the region's demands for public services and development

plans.

Madaba Deputy Abdul Hafez Shakhaneh requested that the government construct a dam in Al Waleh area, set up an industrial city in the Madaba region and improve telephone services. He also demanded that hospital services in Madaba district be expanded and upgraded.

Deputies Abdul Majid Aqtash and Samih Farah requested that the government enlarge the main road linking Amman with Madaba, noting that the narrowness of the

road was responsible for numerous accidents.

Meanwhile it was announced Monday that the prime minister will fly to Accra, the capital of Ghana, to take part in a meeting of the board of trustees of the United Nations University.

Among the topics on the agenda is the establishment in Amman of a special university institute to train government leaders.

Dr. Majali will also meet with several Ghanaian officials to discuss Arab-African relations.

Newspaper editor arrested, charged with libel

By Amy Henderson
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordanian newspaper editor Abdul Rahman Aboushi was arrested and charged with libel Sunday evening as a result of accusations made earlier this year that he allegedly published false information in Al Rasif, a local tabloid, about a local doctor.

In the article, Mohammad Tamliah (a journalist for Al Rasif) wrote that surgery on a prolapsed disk performed by Ishaq Maraga in July 1993 resulted in the paralysis of the patient, Ibrahim Al Atar.

Under Jordanian law, the editor-in-chief of any paper assumes all responsibility for the content of the publication, which was why Mr. Aboushi was arrested.

But, Faoud Saudi, Mr. Aboushi's attorney, expects that charges also will be brought against Mr. Tamliah. The defendant has entered a plea of not guilty.

According to Mr. Saudi, Dr. Maraga and his attorney agreed that the editor should be released until the matter is investigated further and a court date is determined. Mr. Aboushi was released yesterday on JD 500 bail raised by family members.

In an interview with the Jordan Times, Dr. Maraga

said the article was absolutely not true, calling the whole incident a "professional insult." The only truth in the article, Dr. Maraga said, was that a surgery had been performed on the patient mentioned in the article.

Dr. Maraga, a practising surgeon at Shmeisani Hospital and head of the Jordanian Medical Association (JMA), said that the surgery was not performed by him, but a colleague of his. However, Dr. Maraga stressed, "the patient was never paralysed."

The surgery did encounter a routine complication, he added. "There was infection at the site which is normal in a surgery, but there were no unusual complications." To his knowledge, the doctor said, the patient is now enjoying good health.

Mr. Aboushi's lawyer said Mr. Tamliah obtained the information from the patient, but also added that Dr. Maraga's lawyer said that the patient, Ibrahim Al Atar, has denied any knowledge about the matter and has said that he at no time made such allegations against the doctor.

Dr. Maraga said he had never been contacted by Mr. Tamliah to confirm or deny such allegations.

The claimant is seeking JD 1 million in restitution, according to Mr. Saudi.

'Peace era to pose serious challenges to higher education'

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Higher Education Rabea Saoud Monday said that Jordan's peace with Israel was expected to pose serious challenges pertaining to higher education.

Addressing a seminar organised by the University of Jordan to discuss the development of education in the Kingdom, the minister demanded that Jordan adopt a higher education strategy which would control the quality of education in the Kingdom and ensure that courses are linked to socio-economic development programmes.

Drawing a contrast between Jordanian and Israeli universities, Dr. Saoud said

that Israeli universities seldom encounter problems and they actively participate in drawing up socio-economic policies for the Jewish state and take the lead in scientific research schemes.

Victor Billeh, head of the National Centre for Educational Research and Development (NCERD), addressed the conference saying that raising the efficiency and skill of teachers and improving educational programmes constitutes the major issues facing the educational development process in the Kingdom.

To deal with these issues, he said, school textbooks and programmes for advanced

training of teachers are being prepared.

In addition, Dr. Billeh said, special attention is being given to vocational training to meet the country's labour market needs, and new school buildings are being constructed to replace rented premises.

Kamal Duwani, head of the Educational Department at the Educational Sciences Faculty, said that the seminar was part of a series of meetings to help rally support for the ongoing efforts aimed at promoting education.

University of Jordan President Fawzi Gharaibeh was among the audience attending the seminar.

University students to boycott classes

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — More than 1,000 University of Jordan students are expected to boycott classes today after negotiations with the university administration concerning the 60 grade system failed, said the boycott organisers.

In a statement issued by the student union, it called on more than 4,500 engineering and science students not to report to classes Tuesday in protest.

The problem arose nearly three weeks ago when the student union asked the university administration to adjust the current academic examination regulations which stipulate that students retaking courses they have failed can only attain a maximum of 60 per cent and at the same time, the failing grade would not be added to the student's transcript.

The student union is calling for the elimination of the 60-point grade system and allowing the scored grade to be added to the student's grade point average and not the failing

grade, or at least increase the maximum percentage to 75 for students who retake courses.

"The administration is purposely delaying the matter and they keep telling us that they are studying it," said a student council member.

The statement came following a student union meeting Monday with the Dean of Student Affairs.

"He (the dean) did not say anything new, instead he started telling us about the current regulations, and we felt that he was avoiding the issue and bringing up irrelevant subjects," said Mohammad, one of the student union members who was present at the meeting.

The student union had staged a demonstration last Sunday on campus calling on all students to unite with them, and issued a statement listing their demands, threatening to boycott classes if negotiations failed, and giving Monday evening as the deadline for the university to respond.

According to Mohammad Khreisat, dean of stu-

dent affairs, the university is reviewing its records to determine if it is necessary to adjust or change the current law.

The main reason the university is hesitant about changing the regulations, Dr. Khreisat said, is that some students might take advantage of the new changes and fail the courses purposely.

This, he added, is a waste of the student's time and adds more pressure on the university because it requires increasing the number of staff and classes to overcome the increasing numbers of those students who retake courses.

According to Dr. Khreisat, the administration will conclude its review on Wednesday, and "based on it, we will take the necessary procedures," he said.

But one union member told the Jordan Times: "If the university does not respond to our demands, we will continue our protest and call on students at other faculties to join us, until this problem is solved."

Rain, cold expected through Thursday

AMMAN (Petra) — The Meteorology Department said the Kingdom will continue to be affected by a low atmospheric pressure centred north of Syria, with rainy and cold weather expected to last through Thursday. The department said the weather will start to improve Friday, although there will remain a possibility of scattered showers in the northern and central parts of Jordan. In the Gulf of Aqaba, the department said, it will be partly cloudy with a chance of scattered showers.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Regent congratulates Albania

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad, the Regent, Monday sent a cable to Albanian President Sali Berisha congratulating him in his name and on behalf of the Jordanian people and government on Albania's national day. Prince Mohammad wished Mr. Berisha good health and happiness and the Albanian people further progress and prosperity.

Rawabdeh meets Syrian assembly speaker

DAMASCUS (Petra) — Education Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Abdul Raouf Rawabdeh Monday met with Speaker of the Syrian People's Assembly Abdul Qader Qaddoura. Mr. Rawabdeh and Mr. Qaddoura discussed issues related to the fifth conference of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

PSD issues lesser pilgrimage rule

AMMAN (Petra) — The Public Security Department (PSD) Monday said it will allow Jordanian citizens to host relatives coming from Israel to perform the lesser pilgrimage (Umra) to Mecca and Medina for a maximum period of one week. The PSD urged those willing to host relatives to call at the PSD's Residence and Borders Directorate in Abdali beginning today to obtain the needed permits.

Water ministry seeks NGO help in dealing with water problems

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Water and Irrigation is seeking continued cooperation with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) such as the Jordan Environment Society (JES) (formerly the Jordanian Society for the Control of Environmental Pollution) in dealing with water problems and shortages in the country, according to Mohammad Bani Hani, the ministry secretary general.

Cooperation in water related issues, protection of water resources from pollution and sound management of

those resources are needed to ensure 'sustainable' development, said Dr. Bani Hani at the opening of a three-day workshop held at Amra Hotel to discuss the organisation of a national campaign for rationalising water consumption.

Dr. Bani Hani told the Jordan Times that the workshop was part of wide-ranging campaign to spread public awareness of the importance of water consumption. He said attention is now being directed towards the rural regions following campaigns that were held earlier

in Amman.

He said that the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has pledged \$11 million for the execution of the "awareness and conservation" campaign which started a year ago.

It is through the NGOs and local leaders of various communities that the Water and Irrigation Ministry is trying to educate citizens on the scarcity of water resources in the Kingdom and the urgent need to conserve, added Dr. Bani Hani.

WHAT'S GOING ON

FILM

★ Film (in German with subtitles in English) entitled "Verlorene Landschaft" at Goethe-Institut at 7:30 p.m.

CHARITY BAZAAR

★ Charity bazaar (includes books, tapes, clothes, and accessories) at Mu'tab University.

EXHIBITIONS

★ Motor show '95 at the International Motor Exhibition, airport highway.

★ Exhibition of paintings by Saadi Al Kaabi at Alia Art Gallery.

★ Exhibition of sculptures by Amer Khalil at Baladna Art Gallery.

★ Ceramics exhibition by Mahmoud Taha at Darat Al Funun.

Berlusconi ready to face accusers

ROME (R) — Italy's Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, declaring "I have nothing to hide", said Monday he was ready to meet Milan's "clean hands" investigators at any time and on their own turf to answer allegations of corruption.

"If they want, and if (my) lawyer agrees, I can be in Milan and in front of the magistrates in 10 minutes," Mr. Berlusconi told the newspaper *La Repubblica* as he began a vital week in his battle to stay in power.

Dismissing talk that he would be questioned at a secret location, he said the meeting would take place at the Milan Prosecutor's Office.

"I have nothing to hide and I've a duty to Italians as prime minister," Mr. Berlusconi said. "Any day is good for me."

The magistrates, whose investigations into graft topped Italy's political old guard, asked to question Mr. Berlusconi last Tuesday when they informed him he was under inquiry for alleged cor-

ruption involving his Fininvest business empire.

No date has been set for the questioning session.

News of the investigation marked Mr. Berlusconi's blackest week since he entered politics in January with promises to blast graft from government.

The media tycoon has since fought back, swearing on the lives of his five children that he had done nothing wrong.

He is due to meet his coalition cabinet at 0900 GMT Tuesday for a test of loyalty in which he will ask his fractious partners to rally round a programme for government over the coming months.

Mr. Berlusconi will also meet trade unions Wednesday, with his aides talking optimistically of prospects for a deal on his contentious 1995 austerity budget that would avert an eight-hour general strike Friday and ease its parliamentary passage.

A successful outcome at both meetings would strengthen Mr. Berlusconi's hand and banish the immediate

prospect that he may be forced to stand down, political analysts believe.

The Northern League, however, has made clear it will for now only support Mr. Berlusconi until the budget, designed to cut \$30 billion from next year's deficit, has been approved.

The budget bill, from which unions want controversial pensions reforms decoupled, must by law be passed by parliament by the end of the year.

League leader Umberto Bossi, Mr. Berlusconi's biggest and most combative partner, said his federalist party would then insist on a thorough review of the future of their shaky alliance.

"If we had to replace him (Berlusconi), what would the problem be? When one Pope dies you choose another," Mr. Bossi told the newspaper *Il Giornale*.

Berlusconi is proving himself incapable of governing. He's not got much time left to prove the oppo-

site," Mr. Bossi said.

The probe into Mr. Berlusconi covers allegations that companies in his \$7 billion a year media-to-retailing empire bribed tax police in return for favourable audits.

Mr. Berlusconi insisted in interviews that he had no knowledge of the payments but said he regarded them as extortion.

"It was outright robbery at our expense," he said.

Mr. Berlusconi has portrayed the investigation against him as part of a political conspiracy and sought to depict himself as the only man capable of governing Italy.

"This is not justice. There have been repeated attempts to get me," Mr. Berlusconi told *La Repubblica*.

About 7,000 people demonstrated in his support in the northern city of Turin Sunday.

"I'm going ahead because I know that is my duty and because it's what my country needs," Mr. Berlusconi told the Turin newspaper *La Stampa*.

Russia rejects Chechen charge of involvement

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russia curtly rejected Monday allegations that it had supplied weapons and troops to pro-Moscow forces fighting to oust the leader of the breakaway Caucasian Republic of Chechnya.

The denial by Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev quoted by Interfax News Agency came the day after Chechen President Dzhokhar Dudayev claimed on Moscow television that Russian troops had taken part in an unsuccessful two-day assault on his capital Grozny.

Gen. Grachev told Interfax that if the Russians had participated, "just one regiment of Russian paratroopers would have been enough to settle the problem within two hours."

"There are lots of mercenaries from Afghanistan, the Baltic and other countries currently fighting alongside the forces of Dzhokhar Dudayev," Gen. Grachev charged.

Mr. Dudayev who proclaimed his small republic independent from Russia in 1991, said Sunday that his forces had "completely routed" the opposition which attacked Grozny Saturday using planes and helicopters.

"It is Russian aggression and open military operations," Mr. Dudayev insisted.

"All crews are Russian to a man, the military professional equipment is Russian. What opposition in the world has ever had assault aircraft?"

"I responsibly state that Russia's supreme political leadership is intentionally whipping up the situation in order to unleash a colossal Caucasian-Russian war," Mr. Dudayev told Moscow television in an interview.

Mr. Dudayev said Russians captured by his troops would be shot unless Moscow acknowledged they belonged to the Russian Armed Forces.

"The Russians are holding will be treated like prisoners of war if Moscow acknowledges them. If they are mercenaries, they will be shot," Mr. Dudayev told journalists Sunday night in his presidential palace.

Interfax News Agency



A burned corpse lies near a tank of the Chechen opposition troops, which was destroyed during a battle between government forces and Moscow-backed rebels for control over the Chechen capital of Grozny. Opposition forces have reportedly withdrawn, after an unsuccessful attempt to capture the city (AFP photo)

quoted Chechen security officials as saying nearly 70 Russian nationals could be executed Tuesday.

On Monday the situation in Grozny was calm after opposition forces withdrew about 20 kilometres from the city Sunday. Rebel leaders said they had pulled back to "regroup" and refused to admit defeat.

But a rebels' officer who asked not to be identified said Monday that opposition forces had suffered heavier losses than the 25 dead they had admitted to losing.

He said about 100 opposition soldiers had died in the fighting while Mr. Dudayev's army leadership said between 200 opposition troops had been killed.

There was no word on government troops losses.

The rebel officer said anti-Dudayev forces had advanced Saturday on the city centre from four directions but had been caught in a hail of fire from Mr. Dudayev forces posted on roofs and armed with grenade launchers.

On Monday most of the windows in the city centre were blown out and the pavements were cracked and covered in broken glass and

debris, testifying to the intensity of the combat.

Meanwhile Russian Khabulov, former Supreme Soviet speaker and a leader of the Chechen opposition, was quoted in an Interfax report as calling for children to be evacuated from Grozny to protect them from possible bombardment.

Russia's Security Council was to hold an emergency meeting Monday on the latest fighting in Chechnya, the Interfax News Agency reported.

The council, the country's top national security body headed by President Boris Yeltsin, had been scheduled to start at 1200 GMT, Ivan Rybkin, the speaker of the Duma, or lower house, said.

"Chechnya is regardless of what anyone says, one of the Russians Federation's subjects and we would like to have the different clans in the republic reach a peace accord," Mr. Rybkin said.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Grigoriy Karasov would not comment on the latest fighting in the republic saying only that he considered Chechnya a part of the Russian Federation "and whatever happens there is an internal Russian issue."

Body shop brings eco-friendly feminism to Saudis

JEDDAH, Saudi Arabia (R) — The British founder of the body shop cosmetics chain, Anita Roddick, said Sunday she is spreading her message of eco-friendly feminism in business in Saudi Arabia.

Body shop, which grew from one small shop to a multi-million-dollar group using alternative business methods, saw turnover rise by 28 per cent last year in conservative Muslim Saudi Arabia where women wear veils in public.

Mascara for the eyes, often the only visible part of a woman's face, and perfume, used widely by Arabian women for centuries, are the biggest sellers and henna has also been a big success. "You have to be creative when doing business here," Ms. Roddick, who has 1,200 shops in 45 countries, told Reuters in an interview during a visit to the kingdom.

"For us, the interesting route is explaining our philosophy of change to customers and business leaders here," she said. Body Shop International Plc, whose world turnover was up 18 per cent in the first six months of this year to more than £200 million (over \$300 million), has 18 shops in Saudi Arabia. The group does not break down revenue by country.

"I have nothing to hide and I've a duty to Italians as prime minister," Mr. Berlusconi said. "Any day is good for me."

The magistrates, whose investigations into graft topped Italy's political old guard, asked to question Mr. Berlusconi last Tuesday when they informed him he was under inquiry for alleged cor-

ruption involving his Fininvest business empire.

No date has been set for the questioning session.

News of the investigation marked Mr. Berlusconi's blackest week since he entered politics in January with promises to blast graft from government.

The media tycoon has since fought back, swearing on the lives of his five children that he had done nothing wrong.

He is due to meet his coalition cabinet at 0900 GMT Tuesday for a test of loyalty in which he will ask his fractious partners to rally round a programme for government over the coming months.

Mr. Berlusconi will also meet trade unions Wednesday, with his aides talking optimistically of prospects for a deal on his contentious 1995 austerity budget that would avert an eight-hour general strike Friday and ease its parliamentary passage.

A successful outcome at both meetings would strengthen Mr. Berlusconi's hand and banish the immediate

prospect that he may be forced to stand down, political analysts believe.

The Northern League, however, has made clear it will for now only support Mr. Berlusconi until the budget, designed to cut \$30 billion from next year's deficit, has been approved.

The budget bill, from which unions want controversial pensions reforms decoupled, must by law be passed by parliament by the end of the year.

League leader Umberto Bossi, Mr. Berlusconi's biggest and most combative partner, said his federalist party would then insist on a thorough review of the future of their shaky alliance.

"If we had to replace him (Berlusconi), what would the problem be? When one Pope dies you choose another," Mr. Bossi told the newspaper *Il Giornale*.

Berlusconi is proving himself incapable of governing. He's not got much time left to prove the oppo-

site," Mr. Bossi said.

The probe into Mr. Berlusconi covers allegations that companies in his \$7 billion a year media-to-retailing empire bribed tax police in return for favourable audits.

Mr. Berlusconi insisted in interviews that he had no knowledge of the payments but said he regarded them as extortion.

"It was outright robbery at our expense," he said.

Mr. Berlusconi has portrayed the investigation against him as part of a political conspiracy and sought to depict himself as the only man capable of governing Italy.

"This is not justice. There have been repeated attempts to get me," Mr. Berlusconi told *La Repubblica*.

About 7,000 people demonstrated in his support in the northern city of Turin Sunday.

"I'm going ahead because I know that is my duty and because it's what my country needs," Mr. Berlusconi told the Turin newspaper *La Stampa*.

Indonesia volcano toll climbs to 49

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP) — A team of Japanese doctors was helping to treat burn victims of last week's volcano eruption as the death toll from its destructive sweep rose to 49, doctors said Monday.

Mount Merapi, which exploded last Tuesday, remained dangerous as hot lava and ash continued to pour out of its ruptured crater, experts said.

Sixty-five emissions were recorded during a six-hour period Monday. They inundated the Boyong and Krasak Rivers, said Atje Purwabandita, a local volcanologist.

In Sardjito Hospital, six more volcano victims died overnight, raising the week's toll to 49, said hospital spokesman Achmad Sujudi.

The toll is likely to increase as most of the 36 remaining seriously burned patients are

in critical condition with little chance of survival, said Mr. Sujudi, contacted by telephone.

Mr. Sujudi said a medical team from Japan is helping local doctors treat patients and possibly save some of them with plastic surgery. The Japanese also have donated medical equipment and medicine to all hospitals treating volcano victims, he added.

Rao stakes future of reforms on state vote

NEW DELHI (AFP) — Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao has tied the future of his radical market reforms to the outcome of high-stakes southern regional elections.

The 73-year-old premier is seeking a win in his home state, Andhra Pradesh, and neighbouring Karnataka with a warning that defeat for his Congress (I) party would imperil the reforms just when they are starting to pay off.

India needs at least five years of stability to carry out its transformation into an economic tiger, and only the 109-year-old Congress Party can provide that stability, he argues.

"Once the country is firmly on the rails of progress, it would not matter which party is in power," Mr. Rao said in the Andhra Pradesh district of Guntur at the weekend, but for now India needs Congress.

A defeat for Congress would be seen by foreign investors, whose support is needed for continued economic growth, as a sign of instability the nation of 900 million people can ill afford, he warned.

Andhra Pradesh goes to the polls on Dec. 1 and Dec. 5 while the balloting in Karnataka has been spread over Nov. 26 and Dec. 1.

Political pundits foresee a rebellion against Mr. Rao's leadership within his party if he is not able to retain the two states.

And defeat could force a slowing of the 40-month-old reform process while congress prepares for six state polls next year leading up to 1996 national elections.

In an interview with India Today magazine, Mr. Rao expanded on his campaign theme by citing the damage done by the September plague outbreak in the city of Surat, a diamond processing and textile hub.

"It has caused us untold losses by way of taxes, income and investment," he said. "The stakes are high in these elections for everyone. The people, the government, for the country."

Meanwhile opposition supporters burned vehicles and blocked trains in Bombay Monday during a crippling general strike called to protest the deaths of nearly 130 tribal residents in a recent stampede triggered by a police baton charge.

The police reported dozens of arrests during the sporadic violence Monday in the metropolis, capital of the western Indian state of Maharashtra, where life was paralysed by the dawn-to-dusk opposition-led strike.

Suburban railway services were disrupted as protestors stoned trains and blocked the tracks with planks and burning tyres, police and witnesses said.

Sanguinetti claims win in close Uruguay vote

MONTEVIDEO (R) — Former President Julio Sanguinetti of the centrist Colorado Party claimed victory Monday in Uruguay's closest election ever, but his two main rivals refused to concede defeat and the counting continued.

Three unofficial projections based on exit polls showed a difference of six percentage points at most between the Colorados, the ruling centrist National Party of President Alberto Lacalle and the centre-left Progressive Gathering.

"Our movement's electoral strength is what allowed us to achieve this result which puts us again in the presidency," said Mr. Sanguinetti 58, who was president from 1985 to 1990.

The Colorados and the National Party had fielded three candidates each.

The Progressive Gathering had only one — former Montevideo Mayor Tabare Vazquez — and said it had retained control of the capital, winning the mayor's office with 45 per cent of the vote.

Mr. Vazquez said his party could still win. Alberto Volonte, the National Party candidate, did not concede defeat either.

South America's smallest country after Surinam, Uruguay has 2.3 million registered voters — and every vote counted in Sunday's three-way dead-heat.

The three parties vying for the presidency were at most 1.6 points apart in opinion polls before the vote, with 28.6 per cent for the ruling National Party, 28.4 per cent for the Colorados and 27 per cent for the Progressive Gathering.

Japan cool on Yeltsin's call for close partnership

TOKYO (R) — Japan responded coolly Monday to a call by Russian President Boris Yeltsin for closer partnership between Tokyo and Moscow, saying a long-running territorial dispute must be settled first.

In a letter to Prime Minister Tomichi Murayama, Mr. Yeltsin voiced hopes that visiting First Deputy Premier Oleg Soskovets could hold "meaningful" talks in Japan leading to "genuine" partnership between Tokyo and Moscow, a Japanese official said.

Mr. Yeltsin gave reassurances in the letter, handed to Mr. Murayama by Mr. Soskovets, that Moscow would stick to the so-called Tokyo Declaration, which stipulated that the issue of four disputed islands would be resolved on the basis of "law and justice."

The declaration was signed in October 1993 when Mr. Yeltsin visited Japan.

"I agree that the two countries should develop bilateral relations and build genuine partnership based on the Tokyo Declaration," Mr. Murayama told Mr. Soskovets.

"But to do so, it is mandatory for the two countries to settle the territorial issue and sign a peace treaty," he was quoted by the Japanese official as saying.

Mr. Soskovets told him: "We consider the Tokyo Declaration as the basis for improvement of the future bilateral relations. It is verified that such a direction is correct."

The disputed islands off Northern Japan — Kunashiri, Etorofu, Shikotan and the Habomai group — were seized by Soviet troops at the end of World War II. Russia refers to them as the South Kuriles while Japan regards them as its Northern Territories.

Tokyo refuses to sign a peace treaty with Moscow formally ending hostilities until Russia returns the islands.

Mr. Soskovets, the most senior Moscow official to visit Japan since Mr. Yeltsin last year, called for Japan's cooperation to promote economic development on the islands.

In a blunt reply, Mr. Murayama told him: "There are difficult issues, because we have our own basic position on the territorial issue."

Japan and Russia signed four agreements Sunday however, that took their economic ties to a new level.

They included wide-ranging support for Moscow's economic reforms, rescheduling \$180 million in trade insurance debt, approval and assistance for Russia's entry into the world trade organisation, to be set up on Jan. 1, and establishing a high-level bilateral trade committee.

"Japan will consistently support Russia's efforts to strengthen democracy, shift to a market economy and adopt foreign policy based on law and justice," Mr. Murayama told Mr. Soskovets.

The two sides also agreed to start talks on a pact to protect Japanese fishermen operating around the disputed islands. Fishermen from Japan's northernmost main island, Hokkaido, have frequently been prevented from fishing near the islands by Russian patrol boats.

Finance Minister Masayoshi Takemura was quoted by a ministry official as telling Mr. Soskovets earlier that Japan may convert part of the \$500 million it has allocated as humanitarian aid for Russian into loans for economic projects.

Mr. Soskovets arrived in Japan Sunday for a five-day visit.

Argentina's Radicals pick presidential candidate

BUENOS AIRES (R) — Argentina's opposition Radical Party voted Sunday to pit a provincial governor against Peronist President Carlos Menem in elections next May if it has few chances of winning.

Horacio Massaccesi, 46, governor of the Patagonian province of Rio Negro, claimed victory in a party poll, saying he had crushed his opponent — National Deputy Federico Storani, 44 — by a margin of at least 130,000 votes.

"I'm the winner, without a doubt," Mr. Massaccesi told a news conference.

Mr. Menem is widely expected to win a second term in the May 14 vote, probably without even the need for a tie-breaking second round.

Opinion polls show the Social Democrat radicals, who as a party are still led by former President Raul Alfonsín, will be lucky if they manage second place ahead of the ragtag broad front left-wing coalition.

Faced with this prospect, Mr. Alfonsín and Cordoba province Governor Eduardo Angeloz — his party's main presidential hopeful — stepped aside and let Mr. Massaccesi and Mr. Storani fight for the candidacy.

Both Mr. Massaccesi and Mr. Storani distanced themselves from Mr. Alfonsín, who is resented by many radicals for having suddenly yielded a year ago to Mr. Menem's bid to seek a second term.

After years of harsh opposition, Mr. Alfonsín surprised his followers last November with a sudden about-face, shaking hands with Mr. Menem on a constitutional reform allowing successive terms.

The broad front quickly picked up the opposition banners, sweeping the capital Buenos Aires in elections last April to a Constituent Assembly and leaving the Radicals to trail third in the all-important Buenos Aires province.

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China arrests mother of dissident

HONG KONG (AP) — Chinese authorities arrested the 68-year-old mother of an exiled dissident after she complained about inflation in a letter to her son, Hong Kong newspaper said Monday.

Xin Hong was arrested in early September in the northern coastal city of Tianjin and accused of "leaking national economic secrets to foreign enemies," her son, Gao Peiqi, was quoted as saying.

Mr. Gao, a former police officer in the southern Chinese boomtown of Shenzhen, bordering Hong Kong, fled to London in March 1992 and now heads a Chinese dissident group, the Sing Tao Daily and the Express News said.

Mr. Gao fled China after spending six months in detention because he offended his superiors, the Express News said without elaborating.

Mr. Gao told the newspaper he suspected Chinese authorities arrested his mother because of his dissident activities.

Mr. Gao said his mother wrote in a letter that prices have risen sharply in Tianjin and that her pension was not enough for a living, the Express said.

Sing Tao said Mrs. Xin would soon stand trial for leaking secrets.

Australia pledges aid to Cambodia

PHNOM PENH (AFP) — Australia has pledged some \$65 million in aid to Cambodia over the next four years, and is expected to boost military assistance to Phnom Penh to help fight the Khmer Rouge, the Australian ambassador here said Monday.

"The need for military aid is quite clear," the ambassador, Tony Kevin said, adding that the aid would be aimed at improving the "quality and discipline of the Cambodian armed forces."

But, he added, "the strongest weapon against the Khmer Rouge is the economic and social development of the country. That is where we will continue to put our main emphasis."

Mr. Kevin was speaking at a signing ceremony at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs presided over by Finance Minister Keat Chhon.

The Australian ambassador said the aid programme, which had no "secrets or hidden objectives," concentrated on four main areas: health, education, agriculture and infrastructure.

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Quebec separatists ready to roll to independence

MONTREAL (R) — Quebec's separatist Parti Quebecois plans to put the details of a referendum campaign or even when it plans to hold the vote. In the two months since its victory over the Liberals, the focus has mainly been on improving the economy.

This is due mainly to a lower-than-expected margin of victory in the popular vote in the Sept. 12 election. Although the Parti Quebecois garnered 77 of the 125 seats in the National Assembly, it won by less than one per cent in popular vote.

Many Quebecers had voted for the Parti Quebecois not as a rubber stamp approval for separation but as a change from nine straight years of Liberal rule which brought double-digit unemployment, high taxes and a rising deficit.

As a result, Mr. Parizeau has spent the last two months talking about job creation and improving the economy.

But political analysts think Mr. Parizeau will now switch

gears in order to build support for separation.

Premier predicts 'yes' in tight Norway EU vote

OSLO (R) — Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland predicted Norwegians would say "yes" to Europe Monday after casting her vote in a referendum on European Union (EU) membership as final opinion polls turned the vote into a last-gasp thriller.

"I believe in victory. You can see it in my face that I really do," a beaming Brundtland told reporters at a polling station in the wealthy Oslo suburb of Bygdøy.

As the second and final day of voting got under way, a poll by the Scan-Facts Institute published in the daily Verdens Gang showed "yes" ahead by 50.7 per cent to 49.3 per cent for the first time in the month-long campaign.

A poll by MMI in the Dagbladet daily forecast a 50-50 per cent result and a Nielsen Norge survey in Arbeiderbladet predicted a "no" win by 52 to 48 per cent. The "yes" camp has gained five per cent on average in polls over the last two weeks.

"We are seeing an increasingly stronger involvement and understanding for what a 'yes' would mean for Norway," said the premier, waging the toughest battle of a long political career.

A majority of Norway's 3.2 million voters, many of whom fear giving up sovereignty to a faraway Brussels bureaucracy, have been widely projected to oppose membership, as they did in a similar referendum in 1972.

But the "no" camp's lead



Norwegian twins, one asleep holding a poster saying "Yes", the other saying "No", sit in their stroller in Drammen outside Oslo. Opinion polls have consistently indicated that a

majority of Norwegians oppose EU membership, but the "Yes" side has slowly gained ground and could be within reach of an upset. (AFP photo)

in opinion polls has gradually shrunk to between two and eight percentage points Sunday and the dead-heat Monday.

Mrs. Brundtland, the Social Democrat leading the "yes" forces, and Centre Party leader Anne Enger Lahnstein, dubbed the "no queen" by the media, made final appeals for a high turnout.

"Everybody must vote today and show responsibility so that Norway will not be left alone on the outside. You who are still hesitating can secure a 'yes'," Mrs. Brundtland said in Verdens Gang.

"Those who are for 'no' must vote even if the weather is bad. Every vote counts," Ms. Lahnstein told the newspaper.

Half of Norway's 435 voting districts opened their polling stations Sunday and electoral officials reported an unusually heavy turnout, despite harsh weather in the far north and freezing fog around the capital.

Polling stations are open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. (0800-2000 GMT). Television stations are expected to broadcast results of exit polls soon after voting ends, although

full results could take hours to be registered.

Unlike neighbouring Sweden and Finland, which both voted to join the EU from Jan. 1 in referendums in the past six weeks, a passionate debate over Norway's relationship with the rest of Europe has split the country down the middle.

Mrs. Brundtland has urged her intransigent countrymen to join their Nordic neighbours in entering the EU in order to gain a voice in shaping the economy, peace and environment of Europe.

U.S. agrees to incentives for Bosnia Serbs, Serbia to end war

LONDON (R) — The United States, under pressure from European allies trying to end the war in Bosnia, has agreed to offer the Bosnian Serbs and Serbia fresh incentives as part of a new peace push by major powers, diplomats said Monday.

The diplomats told Reuters Washington reluctantly agreed to the approach at a meeting of officials from the five-nation "contact group" in Paris Sunday.

Foreign ministers from the United States, Russia, France, Britain and Germany met in Brussels Friday and are now expected to offer new concessions to stop the fighting, since the threat of NATO military might has failed to do so.

This will include giving the Bosnian Serbs the right to form a confederation with Serbia if they accept the international peace plan that they have so far rejected. The plan would divide Bosnia in half between the Serbs and the Muslim-Croat alliance.

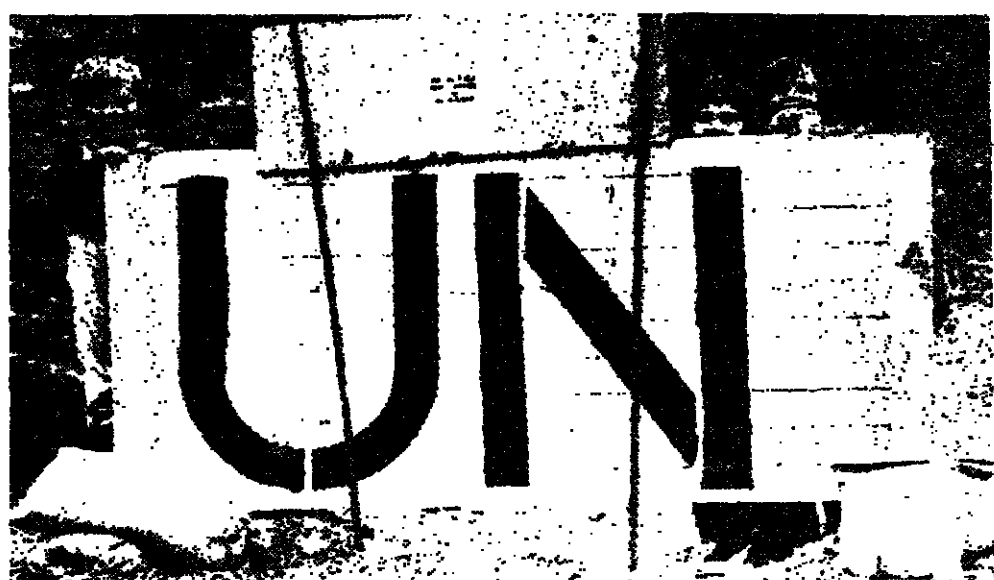
In addition, Serbia will be offered more relief from U.N. sanctions if it helps to bring the Bosnian Serbs to accept the plan and agrees to a scheme that would ease long-running tensions with Croatia.

Until now, the United States has fiercely opposed offering any fresh concessions to the Serbs and has taken a pro-Muslim line in Europe's worst conflict since World War II. This has caused a major rift within NATO and with Russia.

The latest agreement could provoke fresh criticism of the U.S. administration from the Congress, which could yet force President Bill Clinton to lift an international arms embargo for the Muslim-led government unilaterally.

"The Americans have gone along with this because they realise there's now not much alternative, but it's risky for them in domestic terms," said one diplomat.

With the failure of the United Nations and NATO to defend the Muslim enclave of



Muslim children from the village just outside Novi Travnik in central Bosnia hide behind a wooden United Nations sign as they play near a

joint Muslim-Croatian check-point (AFP photo)

Bihac, the only hope now appears to lie in a fresh diplomatic effort for peace — since Western powers are not prepared to intervene with massive force to end the war.

The other members of the contact group have been trying to persuade the United States for some time that fresh incentives must be offered to the various Serb communities.

The Bosnian Serbs, who control 70 per cent of the former Yugoslav Republic and now appear to have gained the upper hand in the war, have rejected the peace plan on the grounds it would mean giving up too much territory.

Washington, which blames the Serbs for the war, had previously refused to accept the idea that Bosnian Serbs might be able to link their territory in an agreement with Belgrade that might fulfil the dream of a "greater Serbia."

This, U.S. officials always said, would reward Serb aggression and threaten the future territorial integrity of Bosnia as a sovereign state.

But European powers have

argued that the Bosnian Serbs should simply be given the same rights as the Muslim-Croat alliance, which could forge links with Croatia.

German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel said Monday concessions to Serbia would be possible only if Belgrade made real efforts and recognised Bosnia's borders as "unambiguous abandonment of the dream of a greater Serbia."

A statement issued Monday on behalf of the contact group maintained a facade of unity and vowed to pursue diplomatic efforts this week.

"The contact group is united in its demand for an immediate ceasefire in Bihac and the cessation of hostilities throughout Bosnia-Herzegovina in pursuit of the territorial settlement proposed by the contact group," it said.

Senior officials of the five powers flew to Belgrade Monday to press efforts for a negotiated solution. But diplomats said it was not clear what influence Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic could bring to bear on the

Bosnian Serbs. Foreign ministers of European Union governments met in Brussels Monday in an attempt to salvage the credibility of international peacekeeping in Bosnia.

German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel forecast the EU session would be difficult after successful Serb defiance of the U.N.'s writ in Bihac and of NATO airpower.

A six-day onslaught against Bihac town and its population of more than 60,000 Muslims has driven a barely concealed rift between U.N. peacekeepers and NATO and between the Western allies themselves.

Serb forces avenging a defeat by the Bosnian government army's Bihac-based 5th Corps have made the alliance and the U.N. look politically and militarily helpless.

Senator Robert Dole said on television: "I think we have a complete breakdown of NATO... the U.N. probably ought to leave (Bosnia) ... because in my view what they have done from the start is to help the Serb aggressors."

No mini-summit on Angola in Morocco — Soares

LISBON (AFP) — Portuguese President Mario Soares Monday denied reports that a mini-summit on Angola has taken place in the Moroccan capital Rabat after holding talks here with U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali.

Soares declared that the basis for an end to the civil war that began on Angola's independence from Portugal in 1975 was the Lusaka protocol signed by the Luanda government and UNITA rebels on Nov. 20.

"There are no other proposals," Mr. Soares said. Now it was "necessary to give continuity" to the protocol, which led to a ceasefire that took effect Tuesday last week.

The regular army and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) have each accused the other of violations of the pact, but U.N. personnel in Luanda have said they have no reports of major problems.

On Monday, the influential Portuguese daily speculated the UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi was attending a mini-summit in capital Rabat Monday as part of a bid to push ahead with a political settlement following the ceasefire.

The Lisbon newspaper considered in an editorial that Mr. Savimbi could be having talks with Mr. Soares, Dr. Ghali, Morocco's King Hassan II and South African President Nelson Mandela, who have all been in Rabat.

King Hassan has been close to Mr. Savimbi and offered to mediate in the Angolan conflict. Mr. Man-



South African President Nelson Mandela (right) confers with Secretary General of the United Nations Boutros Ghali before their dinner with Moroccan Prime Minister Abdel-

atif Filali. Mr. Mandela arrived here Sunday morning for a private two-day visit (AFP photo)

dela also became involved after his African National Congress swept to power in South Africa's historic first all-race elections this year.

But Dr. Ghali declared Monday that he had held talks with Mr. Soares to "exchange views," made no mention of Mr. Savimbi's whereabouts and said he and the Portuguese leader had come up with no "new proposals."

Mr. Savimbi is said by UNITA to be in his own country, but he failed personally to turn up and sign the peace protocol as scheduled with Angolan President Jose Eduardo Dos Santos in Lusaka.

The pact, which provides for a political settlement and

the demobilisation of the rival armies, was signed by their aides. UNITA blamed Mr. Savimbi's absence on offensives by government troops, but he has on past occasions expressed considerable concern for his own security.

A previous 1991 peace pact collapsed when UNITA lost general elections in September 1992, and in a climate of mistrust, both Mr. Savimbi and the government have come under considerable international pressure to reach a new settlement.

The Angolan government has said it will only deal with the issue of Mr. Savimbi's "special status" once he emerges into the open.

When government troops pressed home an offensive

and captured Mr. Savimbi's stronghold in the central highlands city of Huambo early this month, Mr. Soares twice reportedly telephoned the UNITA leader.

This annoyed Mr. Dos Santos so much that the latter has refused to attend this week's summit of Portuguese-speaking nations here, the Diario De Noticias reported.

Mr. Mandela was making "a private visit" to Rabat, precisely at a time when the South African government, whose apartheid predecessors long supported UNITA, has proposed to send 1,000 troops to take part in U.N. peacekeeping, and ceasefire monitoring operations in Angola, the paper noted.

Nepali Congress decides to back Communist rule

KATHMANDU (Agencies) — Nepal's Communist Party prepared Monday to stake its claim to rule the Himalayan kingdom after the rival Congress Party agreed to sit in opposition.

"We have decided to sit in the parliament as a disciplined opposition," Congress spokesman Tara Nath Ranabhatt told Reuters after a meeting of the party's newly elected parliamentarians.

"We will provide constructive support to the government," he said, putting an end to more than a week of speculation about Congress's plans following the election of a hung parliament.

Congress, which in 1991 won the country's first multi-party elections in three decades, finished second behind the Communist Unified Marxist-Leninist (UML) Party in polls held almost two weeks ago.

The country has since been in political deadlock. Neither party won an outright majority and both had been jockeying for a chance to head the next government.

The UML, which last week elected lifelong anti-communist Man Mohan Adhikari as its parliamentary leader and choice as prime minister, claims that with 88 of 205 seats in the House of Representatives it has the

right to form a minority government.

Congress, with 83 seats, had been split before Monday's meeting.

One faction led by caretaker Prime Minister Gijiri Prasad Koirala had favoured sitting in opposition, while others were seeking allies within the UML or the monarchist Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP).

Leaders of the RPP, which holds the balance of power with 20 seats, often ruled Nepal in the three decades after a palace coup which ended a brief experiment with multiparty democracy.

Patching up its splits, Congress agreed at Monday's meeting to let the Communists lead the next government.

King Birendra, the constitutional monarch, issued a proclamation setting a 5 p.m. (1115 GMT) deadline Tuesday for parties to decide who will rule.

The UML said it would stake its claim.

"Tomorrow we will go to the king and stake our claim for a minority government," UML spokesman Pradeep Nepal told Reuters.

"We don't want fresh elections in Nepal," he said. "Therefore we will hold separate talks with other political parties to develop a consen-

sus to get their support in parliament."

The Communists, who would dramatically restrict landholdings and slow or even halt a privatisation programme, had not yet shown the support of at least 103 lawmakers needed to win a vote of confidence.

But Congress spokesman suggested the outgoing ruling party might help the UML over the 103-seat hurdle with "constructive support."

In the event of a hung parliament, King Birendra, who yielded absolute power in 1990 in the face of bloody demonstrations, has the authority to choose as prime minister any lawmaker he believes can command a majority.

If no such parliamentarian emerges, the king must choose the leader of the party with the greatest number of seats to head the government. In either case a prime minister must win a vote of confidence within 30 days.

The Communists were expected to form a minority government after winning the support of a tiny pro-Indian party at the weekend.

Leaders of the Nepal Communist Party met late Sunday in preparation for the government's expected formation.

The pro-Indian Nepal Sadhabana Party (NSP), which bagged three seats in the polls, has thrown its support behind the Communists, NSP sources said.

The backing of the NSP and left-wing groups and independents brought to 97 the total MPs so far in the parliament camp, still short of the minimum 103 needed to constitute a majority.

The Communists however said Sunday that they were determined to form a minority government.

Apart from the three major parties the Maoist Nepal Peasants' and Workers' Party (NPWP) had four seats, and independent candidates, two of them leftists, bagged seven.

Analysts said the support of the pro-Indian party, despite its small size, was important for the Communists, at least symbolically, because New Delhi was earlier worried about the prospect of a Communist-led government in Nepal.

But the Communists sought to allay Indian and Western fears by proclaiming adherence to free-market policies in this impoverished Himalayan kingdom, where government services have been crippled by the political deadlock.

Kohl easily re-elected CDU party leader

BONN (R) — Germany's Christian Democratic Union (CDU) re-elected Helmut Kohl as its chairman Monday for the 11th time, with 94.4 per cent of delegates voting for him at a party congress on Bonn.

The result, slightly lower than his 1990 score of 95.5 per cent, reflected Mr. Kohl's continued strong base within the ruling party despite falling voter support for the CDU in the Oct. 16 general election.

It was the final electoral hurdle this year for Mr. Kohl, 64, who saw his coalition's majority dramatically slashed in October and then won re-election in parliament as chancellor this month with only one vote to spare.

At the Congress, only 51 of the 929 congress delegates voted against Mr. Kohl and another 14 abstained. The remaining 864 all backed Mr. Kohl, who ran unopposed.

Mr. Kohl has pledged to retire from the chancellorship in 1998, when he will have ruled for 16 years — the longest period by any German chancellor.

Opening the one-day congress, he urged the conservative party to promote more women leaders and provide more help to families with children as a way to broaden its appeal in future.

Mr. Kohl told his party it had to reserve one-third of its posts for women — a group in which support for the conservatives is notably weak.

The party had to boost its appeal by giving more help for families with children, especially through more affordable housing and new jobs with more flexible working hours.

"If we want to get a start into the future, we have to do it now," declared the veteran chancellor, whose centre-right coalition won a fourth term on Oct. 16 with a dramatically reduced majority of only 10 seats out of 672 in parliament.

"We won't have much time — four years are a short time," Mr. Kohl, unchallenged at the top of the CDU after 12 years as chancellor, has forced his party to think hard

about its future by pledging to step down in 1998.

Stressing the need to broaden its appeal beyond the veteran chancellor's campaign skills, one CDU official described the party's challenge by saying: "We have to turn Kohl voters into CDU voters."

The women's quota, the call to help young families with children and the plan to provide more jobs are all aimed at voters whose enthusiasm for the CDU had proved to be weakest.

Mr. Kohl said the CDU, long opposed to the women's quotas introduced in the 1980s by the leftist Social Democrats (SPD) and Greens, still had far too few women in leading jobs despite years of appeals to local organisations to promote them.

"For a long time, I belonged to those who said it was enough to make appeals," he said, "I will confess today clearly that I have failed with this position."

He urged the party to back a proposed quota that would

come into effect next year, and ensure that women occupied one-third of all party posts and made up one-third of all CDU candidates in local, state, national and European elections.

Critics — both men and women — spoke out against the plan last week but CDU officials said it was expected to pass.

The CDU parliamentary group has the lowest percentage of women of all parties — 13.9 per cent, far lower than the overall 26.3 per cent average in the newly-elected parliament.

A CDU study said support for the party was weakest among young women voters. They have flocked to the ecologist Greens, whose parliamentary faction has 59.2 per cent women.

Both Mr. Kohl and Wolfgang Schäuble, the powerful CDU parliamentary leader, refrained from criticising the Greens when they launched stinging attacks on the opposition SPD and the reform communist Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS).

3 companions of missing Briton found in Zaire

LONDON (AFP) — Three Rwandan companions of a British truck driver who disappeared near violence-torn refugee camps in eastern Zaire were found alive Monday, but some were wounded by bullets, the charity Assist stated.

The three were with another Rwandan in the Briton's lorry when the convoy they were in came under fire Friday in the Rushuru region north of the Katala refugee camp, 60 kilometres north of the town of Goma.

The drivers of all six lorries left their cabs to take shelter and when they regrouped afterwards, there was no trace of the Briton, whom Assist has refused to name.

Reliable sources said he was a 43-year-old former member of the crack British military Special Air Service (SAS).

The relief convoy was mounted by two charities, Assist and Actionaid. Assist said the three Rwandans found Monday, who worked for the International Lutheran Federation, were discovered near the camp they lived, but a spokesman for

the charity said he did not have precise details.

"Our people are going to interview them to see if they can shed any light on what happened," the spokesman said in the Scottish city of Glasgow, where Assist is based.

Goma is the hub for camps housing some 800,000 Rwandans who fled ethnic carnage in their own country between April and July, following the death of Hutu President Juvenal Habyarimana in a suspicious plane crash.

Former government troops, officials and extremist militias of the Hutu majority have been accused of terrorising and intimidating the refugees and establishing violent control over the camps in order to retain a power base.

The new Rwandan government installed by a Tutsi-led former rebel front also includes Hutu extremists of slaughtering between 500,000 and a million minority Tutsis and opposition Hutus in the bloodbath.

Meanwhile, leaders of Zaire, Rwanda and Burundi agreed in a summit on confidence-building mea-

sures for hundreds of thousands of Rwandan refugees in violence-torn camps in Zaire, the Zairean News Agency (AZAP) reported Monday.

President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire, which Sunday handed over to Rwandan authorities 26 alleged Hutu extremists suspected of orchestrating the violence in the camps, hosted the weekend summit in the northern town of Gbadolite.

Defence ministers from the three central African countries will meet in the first half of December to "investigate and recommend solutions to the problem of the regional presence of armed and destabilising elements" and to improve border controls, AZAP said.

An official summit statement had yet to be released Monday afternoon, but AZAP said the three leaders had agreed that "those of the refugees who do not wish to return home will be moved away from the border region in line with the Organisation of African Unity (refugee) convention."

Previously, regional officials and relief workers had raised the option of moving out former government troops and extremist militias of the ousted Hutu majority regime charged with terrorising refugees in the camps.

The new Kigali government established by former rebels of the Tutsi-led Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) in July also accuses them of launching bloody incursions back into Rwanda.

Zaire hosts more than a million Rwandan refugees. The RPF claims that over 500,000 Tutsis and opposition Hutus were slaughtered in organised genocide, but its soldiers too have been accused of summary reprisals and other atrocities. Many refugees are reluctant to return.

Presidents Pasteur Bizimungu of Rwanda and Sylvestre Ntibunganya of Burundi, which shares a history of bloodshed between its own minority Tutsis and majority Hutus, were at the meeting with Marshal Mobutu. Both men are Hutus in new coalition governments.

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Challenge that lies ahead

THE KILLING of Rabbi Ami Ulami, presumably by Hamas guerrillas, near Hebron on Sunday has stirred yet another hornet's nest for the Palestinian-Israeli peace talks that were resumed in Brussels Monday. The redeployment of Israeli troops in the occupied territories is now at stake as the Israeli prime minister hinted again on the day the rabbi was shot that the outcome of the impending negotiations with the Palestine National Authority (PNA) hinged on its ability to disarm Hamas and the Islamic Jihad group. PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat has succeeded in preventing a public display of arms by those opposition groups in autonomous areas in the aftermath of the bloody clash in Gaza city on Nov. 18 but has so far refrained from going any further. Obviously this "success" is not sufficient for the Israeli government, which is now seeking to up the ante for the PNA by insisting that only the security forces in the Palestinian self-rule areas should remain armed. No doubt Mr. Arafat knows that as long as opponents of his peace deal with Israel are carrying weapons they will continue to pose a formidable challenge to his authority and undermine his control over the autonomous areas.

Sooner or later the PNA will have to reckon with this problem and deal with it effectively either by peaceful means or by the exercise of the police powers vested in it. The big issue that remains is when to embark on this task, given that it will be necessary somewhere along the line. One thing is sure though, and that is no matter when any head-on armed confrontation with Hamas and Islamic Jihad takes place, it will be bloody and costly. It is never certain that the PNA would resort to the option of an armed conflict in view of the widespread support for opposition within the Palestinian ranks. In retrospect Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin would be better advised not to push too hard for such a bloody clash as it could only precipitate chaos and disintegration of the whole peace effort. Thus the choice of incorporating Hamas and other opposition groups into this effort should be left for the discretion of the PNA. One thing is for sure though, when a date for Palestinian elections for the self-rule council draws nearer, Hamas and the Islamic Jihad will both busy themselves with electioneering and thereafter with opposing Mr. Arafat and engaging the Israelis in a more peaceful manner. And this is where both Mr. Arafat and Mr. Rabin should concentrate their joint effort.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER in Al Ra'i daily expressed apprehension over the 1995 fiscal budget which, he said, was bound to increase Jordan's foreign debts. Tareq Masarweh said that the budget figures do not give any real regard nor give priority to agriculture or technological research designed to increase food production. The increase in this year's budget over the past year's does not correspond to the increase in national production, nor does it deal with the question of unemployment and the inflated public administration system or improve its performance. The frenzy of peace should not prompt us to make plans for projects which we can by no means afford finance, lest we should fall in more debts which we can never settle, warned the writer. He said that the government ought to give priority to controlling the spiralling prices of basic commodities, give priority to projects of agricultural production and stem the trend of more imports by the private sector. He said that the increase in the volume of the fiscal budget this year is not compatible with the cancellation of part of Jordan's foreign debts as promised by the creditor nations as the price of peace the Kingdom made with Israel. Furthermore, he said, the public administration system is showing more and more weakness every year while Parliament is not doing enough to monitor and control the public administration's performance.

A COLUMNIST in Al Dustour advocated the cause of Ministry of Education teachers who, he said, are being required to stay in their school until the end of the school day though they might have completed their duty in the classrooms. Mohammad Subeishi said that it is unfair to ask teachers to remain behind as many of them feel they have preparations for classes which they can only conduct in a more comfortable climate at home. Furthermore, most schools lack proper heating systems and do not tempt teachers to stay after classes, especially if they feel obliged to go home after carrying out their duty in full to prepare for their courses of higher education they are taking at the university to raise their standards, said the writer.

The View from Fourth Circle

If it ain't working so well, fix it

The mid-term election in the United States earlier this month ushered in the third worldisation of American culture. It confirmed the anti-government, anti-incumbent mood that pollsters had been identifying for many months, but it also may have revealed a much more interesting historical trend in the United States: a move away from strict secularism and the separation of religion and state. Watching this election from within the United States, I often had the sensation that I was, in fact, still in the Middle East, for both cultures are now heavily influenced by the forces of politicised religion — Islam in the Middle East and Christianity in the US.

The active support of rightwing Christian fundamentalist groups achieved two important goals in this election: it moved the centre of gravity of the Republican Party to the right (which means the Democrats will move right with it to keep up), and it helped gain victory for many conservative Republicans. Eight new senators and 43 new House of Representatives members identified with Christian right values swept into office, thanks in part to thirty million voting guides distributed by the Christian Coalition, the single largest and most important national Christian political group. Republican voter turnout increased in every part of the country, and therefore sixty per cent of the six-hundred candidates for local, state and national offices who were supported by religious conservatives won their elections. What does this trend represent, and how does it relate to trends in the Middle East? Clearly, Americans and Arabs are reacting in similar ways to a set of common ailments and challenges: states are increasingly unable to meet people's needs or even to reflect their cultural or national identity. Consequently, the people are trying to modify the nature and role of the state, and the manner in which government wields political and economic power.

That ordinary people in societies as different as the United States and the Arab World are reacting to similar problems in common political ways suggests that we witness today nothing less than the first global expression of disenchantment with the secular nation-state in its present configuration. The modern nation-state as a political/cultural unit was born in England and France in the 16th/17th centuries, and it spread around the world through Euro-imperialism in the 18th-19th centuries.

It may be fraying at the edges of its global diffusion, to judge by events around the world since 1990. As the post-cold war era now exposes the deficiencies of the secular nation-state model in many parts of the world, tribalism, ethically and religious nationalism emerge as the most important identity forms that challenge and seek to provide an alternative to it. It may also need some redesigning in its own heartland along the North Atlantic rim, to judge by electoral results in 1993-1994 in the US, Canada and Western Europe, where conservatives, religious rightists, and devolutionary regionalists have all scored big gains.

An increasing number of states around the world are unravelling in the face of common problems: the inability to accommodate powerful cultural factors such as ethnicity, religion and tribalism; deficiencies in meeting their people's basic human needs (i.e. shelter, income, water, arable land, social services); severe economic, demographic and environmental stress; and the inability to assure the basic physical security of all citizens, especially of minorities who may fear for their rights and survival. Since the end of the cold war five years ago, numerous societies and entire

countries have collapsed into civil war, ethnic strife, or sub-national fragmentation.

Domestic strife routinely kills, injures or exiles thirty-to-fifty per cent of some states' entire populations, in places such as Rwanda, Liberia, Lebanon, Kuwait, Somalia and Bosnia, while wholesale national distress defines other lands such as Georgia, Crimea, Yemen, Cuba, Haiti, Russia, Iraq, Mozambique, Sudan, Zaire, southern Mexico, southeastern Turkey, and the great urban squatter quarters of Brazil's big cities. Something about contemporary statehood in the Third World is not working as well as it should.

In the Middle East, all the leading domestic weaknesses of states — poverty, resource imbalances, political brutality, denial of indigenous cultural identity — may be explained in part by the inappropriate use of the Western secular nation-state model throughout the region; this pertains to old, confident, big states such as Egypt, Iran and Turkey, as well as to young, small, slightly unsteady states such as Kuwait, Tunisia or Djibouti.

"The governance crises and collapse of states that we witness in Europe, the Middle East, Asia and Africa are not a senseless, crazed, atavistic regression from sensible modern statehood to primitive tribal identities and warfare, as Western observers often suggest. They may reflect the messy transition from the failure of the modern state to something more appropriate and durable, an attempt by the sturdy people and the strong, old cultures of flimsy states to assure their survival through traditional forms of communal identity, social configuration and national engineering."

The predominant Western view sees tribalism, politicised religion and ethnic violence in the Middle East (and the former Soviet bloc) as causes of instability and state upheaval, when in fact the opposite may be the truth: the modern secular nation-state, with its oligarchic and violent use of power against its own people, has failed badly, has caused tremendous suffering and despair, and has driven its people back to their religious and tribal identities.

The governance crises and collapse of states that we witness in Europe, the Middle East, Asia and Africa are not a senseless, crazed, atavistic regression from sensible modern statehood to primitive tribal identities and warfare, as Western observers often suggest. They may reflect the messy transition from the durable, an attempt by the sturdy people and the strong, old cultures of flimsy states to assure their survival through traditional forms of communal identity, social configuration and national engineering.

Rabin's conditions for PNA elections 'negate the entire self-rule process'

By Michael Jansen

NOBEL PEACE Prize laureate Yitzhak Rabin has, once again, put the entire Middle East peace process at risk. On Saturday he said, in an interview in the daily Maariv, that he would be willing to withdraw the Israeli army "for three days" from Palestinian population centres in the West Bank so that the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) could hold elections.

This offer amounts to nothing less than a flagrant violation of the Oslo accord which states in Article XIII that Israel should redeploy its military forces "not later than the eve of elections for the (Palestinian) Council," that this redeployment should be "outside populated areas" and that this should be followed by "further redeployments to specified locations" as "responsibility for public order and internal security" is assumed "by the Palestinian police force."

The aim of these elections, according to the Oslo "Declaration of Principles" is to provide the means for "the Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza Strip" to "govern themselves" not to provide

camouflage for the Israelis to maintain the occupation of the 99 per cent of the West Bank they still control.

The "Palestinian Interim Self-Governing Authority," or the "Council," constituted by these elections is meant to govern Palestinians living in Gaza and the West Bank where the Israeli occupation army, is supposed to "ensure public order" for the elections and thereafter.

The PNA's election commissioner, Dr. Saeb Erekat, brusquely dismissed Mr. Rabin's offer but, under the pressure of public opinion to produce a quick fix which might restore his deteriorating credibility, PNA President Yasser Arafat might be compelled to consider elections under some sort of compromise arrangement which would provide for the return of Israeli forces to Palestinian population centres after polling day. This would produce a Vichy style government in the still occupied territories and negate the entire self-rule process. And it would destroy, Arafat and his appointed national authority.

A Palestinian Council constituted under such con-

ditions would have no mandate to rule because it would have no effective power. Its authority would be derived from Israel rather than the Palestinian people. Although such an election would be used to demonstrate to the international community that Israel was proceeding with the implementation of the Oslo accord, it would not suit the Palestinians who would have to go on living under Israeli occupation.

Thus, there would be no point in holding elections in the occupied territories under Mr. Rabin's new condition. Two weeks ago Mr. Rabin made the holding of elections conditional on the abrogation by the PNA of clauses in the Palestinian covenant calling for the destruction of Israel, clauses which had been effectively abolished by the exchange of letters on Sept. 9-10, 1993, preceding the signing of the Oslo accord.

Propelled into accepting the Oslo accord by his foreign minister, Shimon Peres, and similarly-minded members of his coalition cabinet, Mr. Rabin has, ever since the signing, done his best to undermine this accord. First, by stalling over its implementation, then by

reinterpreting its provisions to suit his political purposes.

The plan for self-rule envisaged a 10-month timetable, culminating in elections for the council. Within three months the two sides were supposed to sign an agreement on Israeli withdrawal from Jericho and Gaza Strip; this did not happen until May 4, 1991. Military withdrawal was due to be completed within four months of this agreement; this took place at the end of May; if the timetable agreed at the time of the signing of the accord had been adhered to the pull-out from the Gaza and Jericho enclaves would have been completed before April 13. At the time that this withdrawal was executed the Palestinians were meant to assume control over education and culture, health and social welfare, direct taxation and tourism; authority in these five spheres of endeavour is just now being transferred.

And direct elections for the council were supposed to be held no later than nine months after the signing of Oslo, on July 13, after Israeli withdrawal from West Bank "population centres."

The timetable for imple-

mentation has been strung out to the extent that Israeli redeployment, the transfer of power and of the responsibility for public order have been confused so that there is no clear step-by-step process by which self-rule is being instituted. This deliberate obfuscation of a clearly spelled out process has enabled the Israelis to cling to control well beyond the agreed times for withdrawal and the transfer of portfolios.

The Israelis have used the negotiations for implementation to procrastinate and to rewrite the Oslo accord in such a way as to strip it of its authority and destroy the credibility of the self-rule process and of Mr. Arafat and his entourage.

Israel has also forced the PLO to accept its interpretation of Article V of the Oslo accord which states that "permanent status negotiations" covering the crucial issues of Jerusalem, refugees, settlements, etc. "Will commence as soon as possible, but not later than the beginning of the third year of the interim period." Thus, Dr. Nabil Shaath recently admitted that the Palestinians had allowed Israel to postpone these negotiations until the very

last moment, that is May 1996. Further postponement would probably have to take place, however, because it is likely that Israel, at this time, will be engaged in an election campaign.

Another provision of the Oslo accord Israel has consistently violated is Article IV which states that the West Bank and Gaza Strip should be regarded as a "single territorial unit, whose integrity will be preserved during the interim period." Mr. Rabin's government has disregarded this provision by continuing to build and enlarge settlements, constructing roads which transform the character of these territories and reinforcing its military presence in these areas.

Little wonder that Damascus, which continues to insist that Israel make a formal commitment to full withdrawal from the occupied Golan, does not trust Mr. Rabin. For the Palestinian experience with this still hardline general has shown that he is a man who is not in the habit of honouring his commitments, even those signed, sealed and delivered. The Palestinians' unhappy experience should serve as a warning to all those who would sign deals with Israel.

Sudan's human rights situation worsening, U.N. report says

By Judy Aita

UNITED NATIONS — "Grave and widespread violations of human rights by government agents, as well as abuses by members of different Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) factions" are increasing in Sudan, says U.N. Human Rights Commission special rapporteur Gaspar Biro.

In a report now under discussion in the U.N. General Assembly's Third Committee, Mr. Biro says that "women and children continue to be among the most vulnerable groups targeted deliberately by agents acting for, and in the name of, the government of the Sudan."

Because the plight of women and children in Sudan is "so alarming," Mr. Biro says, he will dedicate considerable attention to them in his next report to the Human

Rights Commission in February 1995. Also calling attention to the plight of students, he says they are "more and more becoming victims of repression by the security and police forces" in Sudan.

In the 25-page report, Mr. Biro expresses concern about the continuing human rights violations in Sudan and discusses in detail violations, detentions without due process, abductions, torture and forced displacement of civilians.

Mr. Biro visited Sudan last year, but the Sudanese government ignored his request to visit this year; he prepared his report after travelling in the region and conferring with refugees, representatives of U.N. and humanitarian aid agencies that operate in southern Sudan, and Sudanese citizens outside the country.

Citing his concern about

the continuing reports of systematic arrest of students, Mr. Biro notes that during visits to Khartoum and September and December 1993 he collected testimony concerning the harsh repression carried out by the security forces in university centres in Khartoum and elsewhere.

"This practice continued unabated despite international protests," he says. Mr. Biro reports that university students in northern Sudan "constitute an especially vulnerable group which must be given more consideration by the international community than it has received to date."

Calling for "continued and intensified monitoring," Mr. Biro says he is "very disappointed by the fact that he cannot report any improvement of the situation of human rights in the Sudan; to the contrary, all the facts

demonstrated that in specific zones of southern Sudan, such as Bahir Al Ghazal or certain areas in western and eastern Equatoria, the situation has deteriorated owing to intensified and regular bombardment of civilian targets by the government."

The 10-year old civil war in the south between the government and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) has caused famine and forced millions to leave their homes.

"In the war-affected areas there continue to be serious violations and abuses committed by agents of the government of Sudan and by members of the different SPLA factions against the civilian population; summary execution, torture, rape, kidnapping, looting of goods and burning of houses are some of the violations of humanitarian law that have occurred

during the past year," Mr. Biro reports. Incidents of particular concern include indiscriminate aerial bombing of civilians by the government, the use of children as soldiers by all parties, the continued interference by all parties in the distribution of humanitarian aid and the increasing use of land mines.

Mr. Biro says hundreds of citizens accused of cooperating with the SPLA reportedly have been killed by Sudanese security, army, and paramilitary units.

"A particularly alarming situation has developed concerning cases of disappearances in towns of southern Sudan controlled by the government," the report says.

"While cases concerning locally or nationally well-known personalities or local workers of foreign humanitarian agencies are widely documented and widely

publicised, the special rapporteur received information during his recent mission on the enforced disappearances of average citizens who do not receive the same degree of publicity."

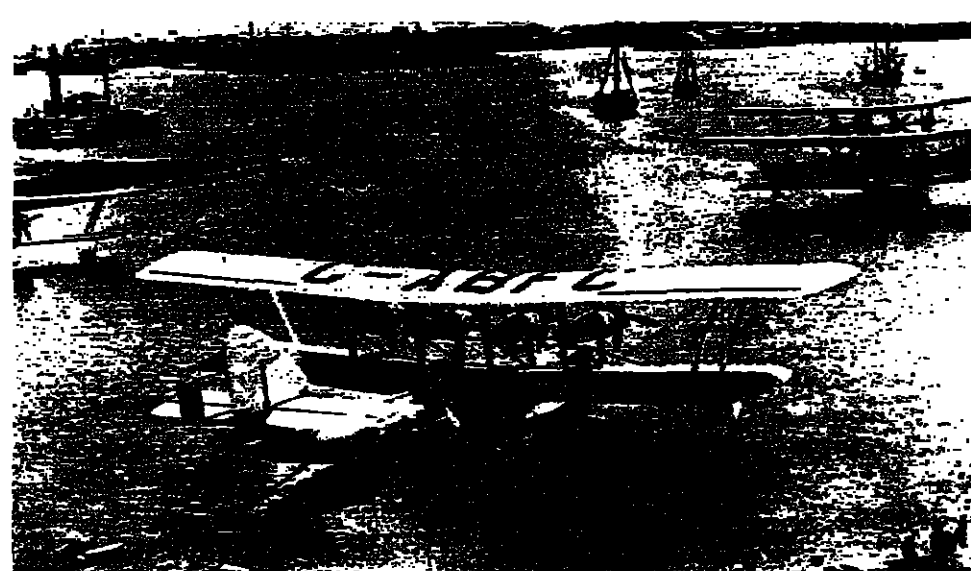
Mr. Biro says he continually receives reports of arbitrary arrest and detention without due process of law. "Journalists, trade unionists, lawyers, students and prominent figures of the banned political parties were among those who were subjected to arbitrary arrest and detention without due process of law," he writes.

Discussing individual cases of torture, the special rapporteur says that those tortured included a trade unionist, a senior member of the Democratic Unionist Party, journalists and former Prime Minister Sadiq Al Mahdi. United States Information Agency.



Short - Empire flying boat. "Challenger"
Taxying on Sea of Galilee
Mid 1930's

75 YEARS OF FLYING HIGH — Back in the "string and canvas" days of flight shortly after the armistice, a de Havilland DH4A aircraft took off one summer morning from an airfield on what is today the outskirts of Heathrow Airport, bound for Le Bourget, Paris. There was just one passenger on board — a reporter from the Evening Standard newspaper, G.M. Stevenson-Reece — and a cargo comprising a brace of grouse, London newspapers and Devonshire cream. The pilot, E.H. "Bill" Lawford, took two and a half hours to complete the crossing in the single propeller, string and canvas biplane. It was truly a flight that made history — launching an industry that we today take for granted. For that was the world's first daily international scheduled air service. And it took place 75 years ago. The service was operated by a company called Aircraft Transport and Travel Ltd, which has evolved through a number of different names, mergers and ownership changes into today's British Airways. So 1994 marks the 75th anniversary of international air travel. The Near East was to feature early on in the company's operations. In 1931 there were weekly mail flights to Cairo, and its flying boats — Short Kents and Calcuttas — used to land on the Nile. They would then proceed, via various transit points, to India — then part of the British Empire — and land at Karachi. There were also services into Alexandria, Gaza, Tiberias and Haifa. That initial London-Paris route remains the world's busiest international route.



The Three Short Kent Flying Boats
"Scipio", "Sylvanus" and "Satyrus"
Moored in Alexandria Harbour.

Each aircraft carried 15 passengers and cruised at 105 MPH



The first Jordanian tourist group to arrive in Israel are greeted at the Arava border crossing by Eliat Mayor Gabi Kadosh (right) who is holding a torch-light, used during the Jewish "Hanukkah" festival (AFP photo)

Students visit Haifa

(Continued from page 1)

only to third country nationals.

Hundreds of Israeli tourists have already visited Jordan since border crossings opened two weeks ago. The open borders are part of the peace treaty signed Oct. 26 in the presence of U.S. President Bill Clinton.

Jordanian tour operators have complained that Israel is slow in issuing visas for Jordanians.

Hanukkah in Cairo

In Cairo, members of Egypt's small Jewish community celebrated Hanukkah with 13 Hasidic rabbis who came from Israel especially to mark the holiday.

The service was at the 80-year-old main synagogue downtown under tight security, including police with assault guns outside and plainclothes police seated in the congregation. Israeli diplomats, headed by Ambassador David Sultan, also attended.

Yosef Hecht, chief Rabbi of Eliat, said his group also was celebrating the reading of a chapter of a book written

by the Jewish philosopher Maimonides, also known as Moses Ben Maimon, who lived in Egypt in the 13th century.

Most Egyptian Jews who attended were elderly women, remnants of the 70,000 Jews who lived in Egypt until the establishment of Israel in 1948. An Israeli embassy spokesman said about 100-150 Jews remain in Egypt.

Mr. Sultan joined the rabbis and Egyptian Jews in dancing to celebrate the occasion. Later they lit the candle for the third day of the eight-day feast.

"We are here to celebrate with the Jewish community in Egypt this important occasion," said Rabbi Hecht. He added that he felt safe in Egypt "with all the protection the police is providing us."

The head of the Jewish community, Emile Rousseau, produced laughter when he thanked "our dear Egyptian President Anwar Sadat for all the care he is giving us." He quickly realised his error and added, "Sorry, President Hosni Mubarak."

Hamas not to down arms

(Continued from page 1)

The papers were released four hours later.

Meanwhile hundreds of Jewish settlers on Monday buried a rabbi killed in an attack by militants. One leader was reported as calling for revenge.

In Sunday's attack, gunfire killed Ami Olami, 35, of Otniel, a windswept mountain-top settlement several kilometres from Hebron, where tensions have been high since the massacre of 30 Palestinian worshippers by a settler in February.

Israeli sources said the settler came from a passing car carrying at least two men, or from the side of the road. The rabbi's car drove off the road and flipped over.

Olami was a spiritual leader at Otniel, a settlement founded 10 years ago with about 50 families.

A policeman riding with him was shot in the back of the head, but managed to get out of the car and fire at the

attackers, settlers said. He was hospitalised in fair condition.

An anonymous caller to Israeli radio said he was from Hamas claimed responsibility for the shooting.

About 600 mourners from Otniel and neighbouring settlements attended Olami's funeral in a drizzling rain Monday. Olami's grave was the first being dug at Otniel, settlers said.

Zvi Katsover, head of the Kiryat Arba settlement next to Hebron, asserted to Israeli newspapers that violence would increase if Israel moved ahead with plans to withdraw soldiers from West Bank cities to give Palestinians autonomy.

"There will be a two-sided massacre. Under no circumstances we will agree to be sitting ducks. We have to respond," Mr. Katsover said, according to the Maariv daily.

By Vanora Bennett
Reporter

MOSCOW — Yuri Boldyrev has seen something rotten in the state of Russia.

Eighteen months after he was sacked as the post-Soviet nation's chief corruption buster, this liberal parliamentarian has a dark vision of the ills Russia's leaders have brought upon their country through their greed and lust for unlimited power.

"The root of the problem is the policy of all our current executive leaders, including the head of state and his backers, of concentrating in their own hands absolutely uncontrolled power, allegedly for the sake of reform," he said.

"It's already becoming obvious that this much power is turning — inevitably — into mafia rule."

For the first time in over a year, corruption has returned to the top of the Russian political agenda. A series of recent scandals over graft in the army has shocked the nation.

The last time so much public attention was focussed on

the probity of Russia's ministers was in the summer of 1993.

Then, leaders of both right and left accused each other of dipping hands into the government till and published detailed documents proving how, as part of a growing battle for power.

Those scandals were wiped out of public memory by what followed — which Mr. Boldyrev believes is the defining moment of new Russia's short history.

In October 1993, President Boris Yeltsin, facing rebellion by a parliament which accused him of breaking the law, ordered his defence minister to bombard the legislature with tanks. The ghosts of the 147 victims still haunt Russia, Mr. Boldyrev believes.

"Shooting down one's own parliament doesn't happen every day or in every country," he told Reuters.

He blames the radical reformers in power before that, under pro-western economic supremo Yegor Gaidar, for creating the climate of vice and confrontation which led to the killings.

Mr. Gaidar's men's insist-

ence on instant capitalism, in the first post-Soviet days of 1992, meant they had to condone theft from the state so that the capital to fuel it could be amassed.

"The only locomotive for that was theft on a grand scale."

Not only did the reformist governments condone corruption, they dabbled in it themselves while the president turned a blind eye. Mr. Boldyrev says his own corruption checks into Mr. Yeltsin's reformist allies were repeatedly stopped from above.

"I'm not talking about a series of mishaps, or shortcomings, or procrastination, but a completely conscious policy," said Mr. Boldyrev, 33, who was head of Mr. Yeltsin's anti-corruption presidential control unit for a year.

Mr. Boldyrev says the "vulgar liberals" of Mr. Gaidar's Russia's choice, now waiting in the wings to return to power, are using the same no-holds-barred tactics to deflect popular attention from their own role in the 1993 bloodshed and win back sup-

port. The latest corruption scandals are no more than an attempt by the guilty to pin all the public blame for last year's fighting on Defence Minister Pavel Grachev and Mr. Yeltsin.

"It goes without saying that this is an attempt to focus people's attention exclusively on the narrow problems of the army. It coincides with the wish to get rid of Grachev..."

"Mainly it's the re-praesentatives of Russia's choice. I think they will soon not only distance themselves from Grachev but also the president. They'll try to pass off on these two the blame for, among other things, shooting down the parliament."

While the army is being purged of malcontents, Mr. Gaidar's men are quietly strengthening their position. Mr. Boldyrev targeted Anatoly Chubais, ex-privatisation minister who became first deputy prime minister this month, for particular criticism.

Mr. Chubais' privatisation agency, Goskomimushchestvo, has carried out the biggest

transfer ever of property from state hands since 1992, using a system of vouchers to enable every Russian citizen to buy a piece of his nation's assets at auction.

The showcase of radical economic reform, it has been much admired by international financial organisations. But Mr. Boldyrev said the very system by which it was run lent itself to abuse because there was no accountability.

Mr. Chubais became privatisation minister at the same time Mr. Boldyrev was appointed a Yeltsin aide. Mr. Boldyrev, an ex-electrical engineer with an economics degree, moved into politics as an anti-communist in the Soviet elections of 1989.

But the friendship waned after Mr. Boldyrev turned his attention to the business of his fellow-liberals.

Mr. Boldyrev's biggest political interest has always been tracking down graft. He helped draft the first Soviet corruption law, shortly before the superpower collapsed.

Now a leader of the liberal Yabloko Party — which com-

petes with Russia's choice — he knows plenty about army corruption.

He wrote a 1992 report detailing the off-duty commercial activities of generals in the Russian army then in Germany. He recommended five be stripped of their rank for graft.

But, although he handed his findings personally to Mr. Yeltsin, nothing was done except to "organise away" Mr. Boldyrev's job.

The report only surfaced again after a young reporter on the same trail was blown to pieces by a bomb last month.

Amidst public uproar and growing suspicion that Dmitry Kholodov's killing had been ordered by the Defence Ministry, Mr. Yeltsin finally sacked the former head of the army in Germany, Marvei Buriakov, from his new job as deputy defence minister.

But Mr. Boldyrev isn't pleased that justice has been done at last. "It's obvious to me that this is all a game. It's obvious that there's no more corruption in the army than in any other organ of state power," he said gloomily.

Battle of bootleggers fought across channel

By Paul Majendie
Reporter

DOVER, England — In the French port of Calais, Londoner Dave West runs a multi-million pound business for the "booze cruise" bootleggers of Britain.

Across the English Channel in the British port of Dover, customs chief Steve Clement tries to stem the tide of cheap beer and wine being smuggled over in hundreds of transit vans.

Both will be listening attentively to what Finance Minister Kenneth Clarke might do in his Nov. 29 budget to redress the huge gap between European and British drink tax levels.

With the newly-opened Channel Tunnel now vying with ferries for traffic, the British drinks trade says it is

losing one billion pounds (\$1.5 billion) a year to imported drink.

Britain's Wines and Spirits Federation says almost 10 per cent of turnover is made up of cross-channel purchases.

Brewers claim the bootleggers, who make up to 1,000 pounds (\$1,500) a trip by selling their cheap imports illegally to British drinkers, are threatening the traditional British pub.

Mr. West, who used to sell fruit and vegetables from a market barrow, scoffs at the complaints and says he is stopping bootleggers turning into muggers.

In a war of words fought across the water, customs officer Clement says Mr. West is an entrepreneur without a conscience who robs British taxpayers.

The stakes are high for Mr.

West. He set up Eastenders in France six years ago, had a turnover of 14 million pounds (\$21 million) last year at his Calais warehouse and expects to boost that by 10 per cent this year.

"We sell 50 million pints of beer a year and about half a million litres of wine," he told Reuters at one of his two Calais warehouses. The thriving port has up to 11 million British visitors a year.

He admits to targeting the bootlegger and not just the daytripper taking wine and beer home for his or her personal consumption. "This is allowed under much expanded limits since the European Union lowered trade barriers in 1993."

"I purposefully try to serve bootleggers. Ninety per cent of my business is bootleggers. I see it as a justifiable cause,"

said Mr. West, sporting a fine pot belly under his "Eastenders vinoculapso" T-shirt.

"Many of my customers would be out on the street mugging someone if they weren't doing this," he argued. "I am breaking no laws. I am not my brother's keeper. None of my customers has Swiss bank accounts."

Mr. West mocks the British brewers for having fat profits and for canvassing Chancellor of the Exchequer (finance minister) Clarke to lower taxes.

"They have been huffing and puffing and they cannot blow the chancellor down. The belly-aching beer barons have had a stranglehold on the trade for 200 years."

The government has consistently refused to cut alcohol duties which are far higher than those in France,

arguing that could cost the state six billion pounds (\$9 billion) a year.

Mr. West reasons that the money saved on duty by the bootleggers is pumped back into the British economy. "I think it brings Britain out of the recession," said the cockney who claimed "customs just see me as a likeable rogue."

That was not quite the viewpoint over in Dover. "Would we look on him as a likeable villain? No, we wouldn't," said Mr. Clement. "He has found a loophole and is exploiting it to the nth degree. But he is not breaking the law. He is profiting at the expense of legitimate trade in Britain. What about the small tobacconist and the local pub? He and his like contribute to their closing. He has no conscience."

British customs, who have a team of 250 officers tracking bootleggers around the country, have sweeping powers that are stronger than those of the police.

"If I arrest you at Dover docks, I can go to your home and your business and anywhere you have been," Mr. Clement said.

More than 1,000 people have phoned a confidential hotline set up for anonymous tip-offs. Mr. Clement's 40-strong Dover team have made 700 detections since April and expect to top 1,100 by the end of the financial year.

Seizures abound but what about convictions? "We've had one jailed for 15 months, another for nine and maybe a dozen suspended sentences. I am an enforcer. I don't make the law," Mr. Clement said.

Arafat upbeat on elections

(Continued from page 1)

dent of the European Union.

Mr. Peres also met with British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd, his French counterpart Alain Juppe and the EU's commissioner with responsibility for the Middle East, Manuel Marin.

Officials from donor countries are to meet here on Tuesday and Wednesday to discuss aid to the Palestinian territories.

The Palestinians say they have received only \$100 million of the \$700 million promised to the Palestinian Authority in 1994.

The delays in delivering the promised aid have aggravated the economic crisis in the Palestinian territories and contributed to the growth in support for the Islamic Hamas movement.

The Israeli government is going "too quickly" in negotiations with the PLO, ruling Labour Party Secretary-General Nissim Zivili warned in an interview published Monday.

"If we have got it wrong and have gone too quickly in reaching the agreements we have to admit it without shame," Mr. Zivili told the Haaretz newspaper.

"The Israeli people are not ready to take the same risks

as the government is to push forward the peace process," he said.

"The breakthrough with the PLO has run into difficulties and the government has no answer," admitted Mr. Zivili, who is considered a Labour "dove."

"We cannot deny the facts: twice as many Israelis died in terror attacks during 1994 as during the year preceding the signing of the agreement."

Mr. Zivili said Israel should now seek a permanent settlement with the Palestinians and leapfrog over the scheduled five-year autonomy period or "slow down noticeably the pace of negotiations."

"If we reach the conclusion that Yasser Arafat cannot be trusted, we have to tell people the Palestinians are not ready to go on and halt the completion of the Gaza and Jericho agreement."

After general elections in 1996, Israel should then review the situation, Mr. Zivili explained.

Israeli and Palestinian leaders have asked Sweden to help draw up a plan for easing tensions in Gaza and the West Bank, a news report said.

The Dagens Nyheter news-

paper quoted an unidentified Swedish foreign ministry official as saying the government would present "a concrete plan... for immediate improvements of conditions in refugee ghettos in Gaza and the West Bank" at the meeting.

The report said Sten Anderson, a former foreign minister, had been asked to

help negotiate the plan.

Uri Gutman, a spokesman for the Israeli embassy in Stockholm, confirmed that Mr. Peres and Mr. Arafat would meet for one day on Dec. 12 in the Swedish capital.

Mr. Gutman said that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin would not be attending.

'Ain Al Hilweh fear eases

(Continued from page 1)

dissidents joined the battles. Chief of Fatah intelligence in the camp Lt.-Col. Kamal Midhat and loyalist guerrillas seized six Fatah posts but Col. Shabeh retook them after day-long fighting.

Although a military showdown seemed to have been averted, 'Ain Al Hilweh remained shattered. Schools, shops, restaurants, cafes and businesses were closed in apparent fear of a new round of hostilities.

Col. Maqdash, who has been backed in Friday's confrontation by fighters from the Hamas and Islamic Jihad groups, kept his 300 guerrillas on alert in the southern

part of the camp. 'Ain Al Hilweh is the largest among the 12 refugee camps that house most of the 400,000 Palestinians living in Lebanon.

Lebanese police have described Friday's clashes as the worst in Lebanon since the PLO signed the self-rule accord with Israel Sept. 13, 1993.

President Elias Hrawi warned the warring factions Saturday that the government would send its army into 'Ain Al Hilweh to quell any renewal of the fighting.

There was no sign Monday that Lebanese army troops, who had deployed at the six entrances to the camp, were preparing to intervene.

EU lifts embargo on Syria

(Continued from page 1)

consider lifting the ban because Damascus had yet to sign a peace treaty with Israel and was refusing to hold direct negotiations, preferring U.S. mediation.

Syrian state radio said Monday, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher will begin a new Middle East tour next week aimed at reviving the stalled Israeli-Syrian peace talks.

"The United States is determined to continue its efforts by sending Secretary of State Warren Christopher on a new tour aimed at relaunching (negotiations) on the Syrian-Israeli track," the radio said.

It called on Washington to "state in public" the reasons for the lack of progress on the Israeli-Syrian track.

The U.S. administration knows the real position and knows very well which of the two parties is working for peace," the radio said.

Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel of Germany, which holds the rotating European presidency, has accused Israel of snubbing the EU in the Middle East peace process, a newspaper reported Monday.

Mr. Kinkel voiced his anger to Israeli Ambassador

Avi Primor in Bonn on Friday, the Israeli Haaretz daily said.

The minister complained he was not asked to make a speech at the Oct. 26 ceremony to sign the Israeli-Jordan peace treaty or even to sit alongside the leaders.

"It is not a question of an insult to me or to Germany but to all Europeans," the Haaretz quoted him as saying.

Mr. Kinkel charged that Israel had taken a similar attitude during the Middle East economic summit in the Moroccan city of Casablanca at the end of October.

"You never stop asking us for aid," he reportedly said. "We, the Europeans, are providing most of the finance for the peace process and the Palestinian Authority, but you never stop humiliating us."

Mr. Kinkel allegedly threatened "to provoke a crisis if you don't learn to work with us," Haaretz reported.

"Even (Russian Foreign Minister) Andrei Kozyrev made a speech at the ceremony. He is my friend, but what has he done for the Middle East? The few rubles he has, he owes them to us."

Mr. Peres is scheduled to meet Mr. Kinkel next week in Budapest to try to placate the German, Haaretz added.

New Saudi development plan sets radical priorities

DUBAI (R) — Cash-strapped Saudi Arabia has drawn up a five-year plan that slashes public spending, lessens dependence on oil and promotes the private sector in an economy that has so far been largely state-driven.

The government pledges to balance revenues and expenditure and largely eliminate subsidies during the entire 1995-2000 plan period after more than a decade of deficit financing.

The economic priorities are outlined in a draft of the new five-year plan, a copy of which was obtained by Reuters.

The plan does not set financial targets and must be approved by King Fahd before it comes into effect on Jan. 1.

It says the priorities are: "To rationalise government expenditure and make the national economy more dependent on private sector activities..."

"To adopt a fiscal policy which allows the level of expenditure to be commensurate with government revenues during the entire sixth

development plan period."

"To reduce dependence on the production and export of crude oil as the main source of national income."

Diplomats in the kingdom say senior Saudi officials have told them that the government is confident it will achieve at least 17 per cent of its budgeted spending cut for 1994 and plans further fiscal cuts for 1995.

Saudi Arabia had announced a 20 per cent cut in its 1994 budget to \$42.67 billion to absorb a sharp drop in oil prices and tackle deficits that have plagued its finances for years.

After spending over \$50 billion to help finance the 1990-91 allied war effort to liberate Kuwait from Iraqi occupation, Riyadh is facing its worst cash-flow problem in decades.

subsidised — a major step that reflects the government's determination to risk taking unpopular decisions necessary to rein-in spending.

The draft plan says the government should "reduce production costs of public services and utilities" and "rationalise the system of direct and indirect subsidies provided by the state on many goods and services... with jeopardising the status of low income strata of the society."

Prices of such services should not be less than their production costs except in rare cases and with the provision that they should be periodically reviewed," it says.

Saudi Arabia has already started slashing subsidies to farmers and looks set to increase prices for a range of utilities from power and water to phone charges.

Chinese economist criticises crackdown on state-asset sales

BEIJING (AFP) — A senior Chinese economist has criticised the government's full-scale offensive against the sale of state assets, warning that it would starve the ailing state sector of badly needed foreign funds.

In a blunt speech to an economic symposium, the director of the State Council Development Research Centre, Sun Shengping, suggested that the government had overreacted in its bid to clamp down on local authorities selling off state land and equipment to foreign firms at throwaway prices.

"It is inappropriate to negate the use of foreign funds to upgrade existing state-run companies just because a few such companies have sought short-term interests in cooperating with overseas firms," Mr. Sun was quoted as saying by the Xinhua news agency.

Mr. Sun's remarks came after China's vice premier in charge of the economy, Zhu Rongji, launched a major offensive on state asset sales, saying they were draining "the lifeblood of the state and threatening the very existence of socialism."

Cheap sales of state assets in the past decade are estimated to have cost China some \$60 billion, and the government recently began a nationwide campaign to accurately assess the asset

value of 150,000 state-owned firms in a bid to counter further bargain sell-offs.

However, Mr. Sun appeared to take issue with Mr. Zhu's contention that the sale of state assets necessarily contradicted the socialist principle of public ownership and the protection of state property rights and interests.

"It is wrong to oppose the purchase of state assets by foreign firms as a privatisation measure," Mr. Sun said, pointing out that foreign capital has become a major source of income for economic growth and an important factor for promoting technological growth in China.

The use of foreign funds by state-run firms to upgrade operations is a means of solving the sector's capital shortage and of bringing in sophisticated technology and managerial expertise, he said.

The main problem from the government point of view is that many local authorities use the proceeds from state property transfers to balance budget deficits or for speculative investments, ignoring central directives to channel the money into medium-sized state.

Meanwhile, the China Daily Business Weekly said that at least 36 loss-making state firms in 18 Chinese cities are to go bankrupt before the end of the year under a pilot project to phase out non-

producers.

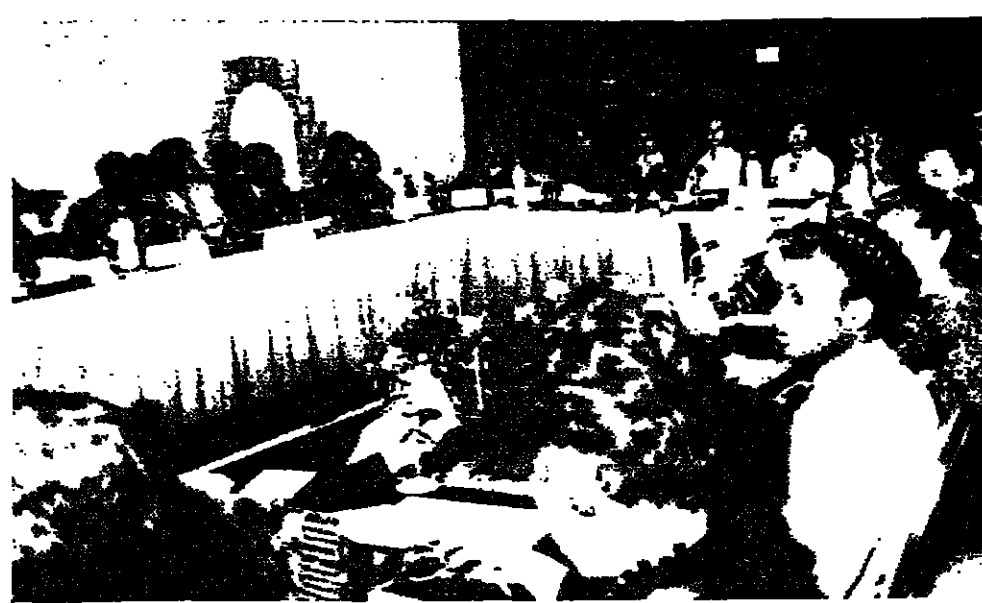
The firms are among 156 enterprises slated to be shut down under the project, launched in August, in cities that include Wuhan, Qingdao, Tianjin, Chengdu, Chongqing and Harbin.

The China Daily said the 156 did not include 52 enterprises in the cities that have already gone under, adding that 40 more — with assets of 4.29 billion yuan (\$500 million) and debts of 4.58 billion yuan — had now filed for bankruptcy.

The report quoted officials as saying that "two or three" firms in each city would go bankrupt by the end of the year, adding that many of them were textile mills saddled with heavy debts.

Although some two thirds of Chinese state enterprises are in the red, government fears of social instability created by massive unemployment have prevented more than a handful from being allowed to fold since Beijing passed a bankruptcy law.

The report said that banks were also opposed to closing down enterprises because they would have to write off the massive policy loans that have subsidised the loss-makers for years.



Participants during the opening session of the workshop on "Women and Credit" which opened in Amman Monday (Petra photo)

Workshop seek effective role for women in credit markets

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A global workshop on "Women and Credit" will try to tackle the inequality between women and men in competing for loans and jobs in developing countries.

"I think that the success of small women's business is now one of the important challenges facing the development of nations in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and also in the Middle East," said Planning Minister Hisham Khatib.

"No doubt women in developing countries do not have yet an equal opportunity to compete with men in production and in the job market," he added.

Dr. Khatib, who deputised for Her Royal Highness Princess Basma, said that women, particularly in the labour force in most Arab nations, do not exceed 10 per cent.

He said that this was due to obsolete thinking and outdated traditions in many cases, and to lack of education, lack of funds, shortage of entrepreneurial skills and also marketing opportunities.

In Jordan, Dr. Khatib said, women now have equal access to education, including higher education, as men. "It's a waste of resources if this talent is not utilised in productive facilities," Dr. Khatib told more than 40 managers and national coordinators of micro-enterprise development projects from 28 developing countries at Jordan Inter-Continental Hotel Monday.

"Women's participation in the production sector is not only needed to enhance the workforce and increase the output and national income but it also enhances family income, women's self assertion and also the female's attitude at home and in the

society," he added.

The five-day workshop, which is organised by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and co-sponsored by the Ministry of Planning, aims at promoting cross regional exchange of experience between countries in credit and micro-enterprise development for women; equip participants with gender analytical tools and discuss gender concerns in micro-enterprise development; to explore innovation credit mechanism, products and approaches which have successfully reached women micro-entrepreneurs and to analyse internal and external factors that effect management of credit projects.

Zohra Merabet, regional programme advisor of UNIFEM in Jordan, who also addressed participants, said that this region faces a serious challenge regarding the participation of women in the financial market.

According to Ms. Merabet, surveys carried out by UNIFEM projects in Syria, Lebanon and Jordan showed that women represent a very marginal portion of the borrowers from the private and national banks and a "pathetic group when it comes to borrowing for business purposes."

She attributed the minimal number of loans to women to two main reasons. One, she said, was that bankers are not interested in granting small loans for micro and small enterprises as the managing cost is too high.

The other factor was that the majority of women questioned either felt uneasy about dealing with the banks or did not have enough knowledge about the availability of special credit services provided by the government or development projects.

Ms. Merabet said that the rapid social and economical changes that the region has been through recently have deeply affected the women's status in a similar way as it did in Europe, America, Asia and Africa.

According to Ms. Merabet, an approximate figure for the region shows that 16 per cent of the women over the age of 15 are economically active but they represent less than 10 per cent of the total labour force.

She called on the participants to share their experiences in improving women's access to credit and to try to lay the foundation to build a global women and credit coalition, which is "a dear objective for UNIFEM as it will certainly contribute to its long-term development goal of a world-wide women economic and political empowerment."

The long-term outcome of the workshop includes improved and gender-sensitive management of projects, and improved network between participants so that more women micro-entrepreneurs can be reached.

The UNIFEM was created as a result of an international conference on women in Mexico City in 1975. Established in 1976 by the United Nations as the voluntary fund for the U.N. Decade for Women, UNIFEM became an autonomous and financial support within the U.N. family in 1985. UNIFEM provides direct technical and financial support to programmes that promotes women and to improve the quality of life for all.

Participants come from Bolivia, Brazil, Cape Verde, Colombia, Ghana, Guatemala, Honduras, Ivory Coast, Namibia, Lebanon, Mauritania, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Paraguay, Senegal, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Syria, Tanzania and Jordan.

Russian diamond region wants bigger share of gems

YAKUTSK, Russia (R) — Yakutia, which produces about a fifth of the world's diamonds, wants to keep 40 per cent of its gems as opposed to 20 per cent now, a top local government official said.

Foreign Economic Relations Minister Vitaly Artimonov said in a weekend interview the vast Siberian region, the size of India, was talking to Moscow to increase its control over diamonds.

"We intend to keep 40 per cent of our diamonds," Mr. Artimonov said in English. "Only diamonds can provide the economic wealth we want."

Yakutia, home to just over one million people, has a virtual monopoly over Russian diamond production.

It also produces about 30 tonnes of gold, 1.5 billion cubic metres (53 billion cu. ft.) of natural gas and 100,000 tonnes of oil annually, making it among the richest of Russia's 21 semi-autonomous republics.

Under a five-year deal expiring in 1995, Russia sells 95 per cent of rough gem diamonds it exports through De Beers' Central Selling Organisation (CSO) which controls the world wholesale market.

Mr. Artimonov said Yakutia was committed to the De Beers diamond monopoly but wanted more. "We are losing money. Our profit from diamond sales is not as real as it could have been."

Yakutia will keep the existing system of relations with De Beers, but Yakutia thinks there are possibilities to reform this system in order to make it just, because the existing system is not very just for Yakutia," Mr. Artimonov said.

"This problem is being openly put before De Beers in Moscow," he added.

Officials in Moscow also accuse De Beers of taking too much. They want more access to world markets and higher prices for rough diamonds. Russia wants an increase in its current quota, 26 per cent of the CSO's world diamond sales, which brought it \$1.13 billion in 1993.

Russians also want an increase in the percentage of rough diamonds it can sell independently of the CSO, which is limited to five per cent in the present contract.

De Beers, which controls more than 80 per cent of the world's rough diamond production, has to pay for an expensive sales and marketing system and finance a large stockpile of diamonds.

If Russia, one of the world's largest producers, decides to quit, it may be very difficult to hold the cartel together.

Mr. Artimonov said Yakutia was committed to a regulated market but said the agreement should be revised. He did not elaborate.

He said Yakutia also wanted to keep more gold — 50 per cent of annual output, instead of 11.7 per cent now.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY NOVEMBER 29, 1994

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Conditions at home are going to require more of your attention now if things are going to end up being the way you want them to be. Avoid one who wants you to make their decisions for them.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Now you understand how good friends fit nicely into your scheme of things, and you gain more success, even though delays may occur.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You think your career activities are not going as fast as they should, so try to find out where the trouble lies. A bigwig can be of help.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You may find that work affairs are rather difficult to handle, but if you improve your credit, all goes much better towards your success.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Get right down to business and handle affairs well, forgetting that desire for pleasure for now. Be more affectionate towards mate.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Make appointments with outside fellow associates who can help to enrich your life. Come to a fine agreement for the days ahead.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Be more careful in driving, and keep focused on the duties which only you can perform the best and with great foresight.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Enjoy a different kind of entertainment, but make sure it is not too expensive. Be more thoughtful of your mate, you can be happier.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Forget yourself, and handle those tasks which kind desire of you, and you can get fine results. You will be happy, but a little tired.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Don't permit a private worry to deter you from accomplishing much in the outside world. Make the evening a fine social one.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Avoid that capricious friend who likes to get own way, and get busy modernising your possessions so they are more functional.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Concentrate more on personal aims now since worldly ones may take more time to materialise. Be happy on adventures with friends.

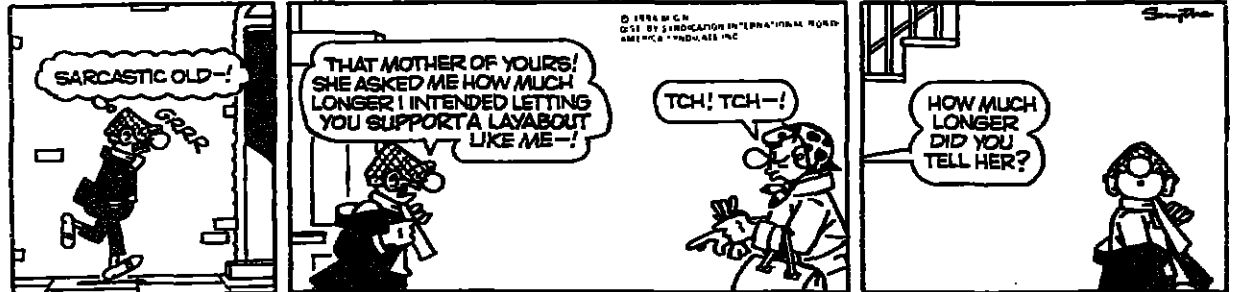
PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Forget that new outfit, and concentrate on worldly affairs which are important. Handle your tasks efficiently and in a timely manner.

Birthstone of November: Topaz-Tiger's Eye

Peanuts



Andy Capp

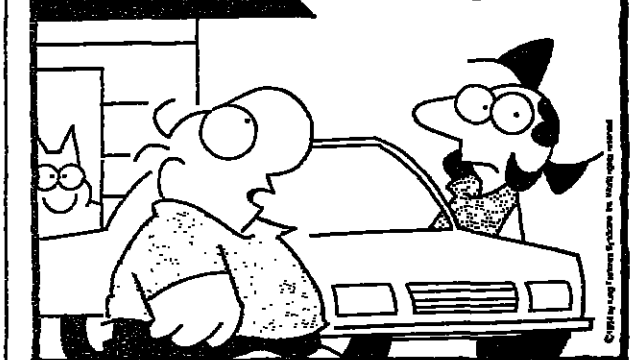


Mutt'n'Jeff



THE BETTER HALF

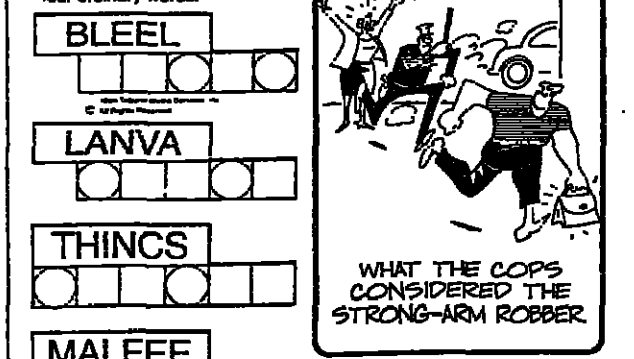
By Glasbergen



"Let's just eat at the diner. Fancy restaurants get rude if I pick my toes with a fork."

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



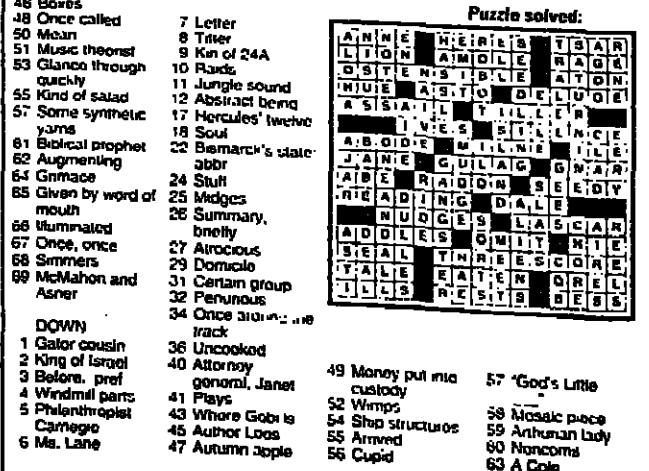
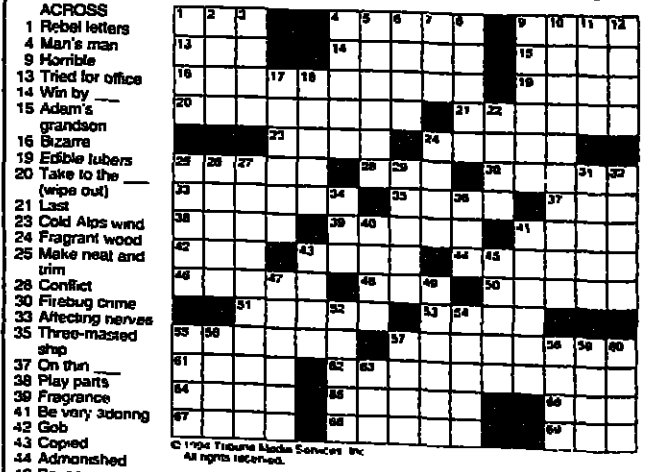
Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here: A OF

(Answers tomorrow)
Yesterday's Jumbles: AROMA TOXIC FATHOM HAMPER
Answer: What the well-to-do stockbroker gave the Maltre d' — A HOT TIP

THE Daily Crossword

by James L. Beatty



11 Chinese athletes test positive for drugs

TOKYO (AP) — The performances of China's athletes at last month's Asian Games often seemed too good to be true. Reports Monday quoting games officials said some of them probably were.

According to several Japanese media reports, the Olympic Council of Asia has found high levels of banned substances in the urine samples of 11 Chinese athletes who competed in last month's Asian Games, a regional version of the Olympics.

Council and Games' organising committee officials reportedly said the samples indicated the athletes had abnormal amounts of testosterone or other performance-enhancing substances in their systems.

The names of the athletes were not released pending official confirmation, the reports said.

But Kyodo News Service,

quoting unnamed sports sources, said one was Lu Bin, who won four gold medals at the Games and set a world record in the women's 200-metre individual medley.

It said another was Yang Aihua, who already has been banned for competition for two years by FINA, the International Swimming Federation, Yang, who won the women's 400-metre freestyle at the World Championships in September, tested positive for testosterone in surprise tests just prior to the Asian Games in Hiroshima, Japan.

Chinese women swimmers won 12 of the 16 golds at stake in the world meet and all 15 of their races at the Asian Games, contributing to China's overall games haul of 137 gold medals in 337 events.

Kyodo also identified Xiong Guoming, a male swimmer who won four gold medals, and track athlete

Han Qing, winner of the women's 400-metre hurdles, as being among the 11.

It said eight of the 11 were swimmers and the others competed in track, cycling and canoeing, other press reports said six were swimmers.

Dr. Yoshio Kuroda, who supervised the final set of tests conducted in Tokyo Saturday, confirmed that high testosterone levels were found in both A and B samples for some athletes.

But Kuroda refused to comment on who was tested, or give their nationality.

Asian Games organisers contacted by the Associated Press confirmed the head of their medical commission was in Tokyo in connection with the tests, but also refused to comment further.

A formal hearing of the Olympic Committee of Asia's medical committee, which Kuroda chairs, must be held before results of the tests can

be made public.

Such a meeting could come within the next week.

At the World Swimming Championships, though they did not name China, more than a dozen coaches lodged a formal complaint over doping in the sport and requested stricter testing. That led to the surprise testing just before the Asian Games began Oct. 2.

FINA officials said the results of those tests indicated possible drug use among several other Chinese women swimmers, but were inconclusive.

Though Chinese sports officials insist they oppose drug use among athletes and publicly threaten to deal harshly with offenders, Yang's case is not the first.

Five Chinese swimmers have failed doping tests over the past two years — equaling the total number of athletes from other countries

that have tested positive in FINA tests over the past 22 years.

Yang is at least the 34th Chinese athlete to flunk a doping test since 1987. Chinese officials acknowledge 24 of their athletes tested positive last year alone.

Another top female athlete, discus thrower Qu Qiang, tested positive for anabolic steroids in an out-of-competition test Sept. 26.

Monday's reports, if confirmed, would raise serious doubts about the effectiveness of testing in general.

Only one athlete — the captain of the Thai men's soccer team — was announced to have flunked a doping test during the two-week Asian Games, which closed Oct. 16.

He had already left Japan before the announcement was made, however.

Parma stay top as Batistuta breaks record

PARIS (AFP) — Depleted Parma, playing without their regular first team players and reduced to ten men in the second-half, stayed top of the Italian first division while Ivan Zamorano continued to make Real Madrid boss Jorge Valdano eat his words in Spain.

Parma forced a 1-1 draw away to Inter Milan, but they had to survive some worrying moments and kept a tight watch on the talented 20-year-old Marco Del Vecchio.

Inter took the lead with a first-half penalty slotted home by Uruguayan Ruben Sosa, but Parma pulled level on the hour thanks to a goal from Marco Branca.

The leaders, who had Luigi Apolloni sent off for a second yellow card, were without injured Antonio Benarrivo, Swedish frontman Tomas Brodin and Colombian striker Faustino Asprilla.

Florentina's Argentinian striker Gabriel Batistuta broke the Italian league scoring record Sunday with his thirteenth goal in eleven games.

His latest effort — as well as a deflected shot attributed to an own-goal by Pietro Vierchow — saw his side draw 2-2 with Sampdoria, for whom David Platt and Ruud Gullit were on target.

Batistuta has scored in every game of the season, heating a ten-match record established by Ezio Pascutti in

1963/64 for Bologna. The next highest goal tally in the Serie A this season is held by Giuseppe Signori of Lazio, who has seven.

Batistuta put away a 60th minute spot kick to level after English international captain Platt fired home a first-half penalty.

Florentina's second came on 73 minutes but then former Dutch international Gullit scored his first goal for Sampdoria since returning from AC Milan two minutes from time.

Last week Batistuta scored two — and again had a shot deflected in by a defender — in the 5-2 win over Napoli.

Real back to the top with his 21st goal in as many games. The Chilean, facing the axe at the start of the season, hit Real's third in a 4-2 win over visiting Tenerife, to give the club 18 points.

Deportivo La Coruna, who went into action without 'flu victim Bebeto, are just behind on goal difference after seeing off Valladolid 4-1 while Zaragoza and Barcelona both contrived to lose.

Valdano, who vowed to sell the struggling Zamorano when he took over at the club at the start of the season, admitted: "We were going to try and swap him for another 'jet-set' player like a Fonse-

EUROPEAN SOCCER

The result moved Fiorentina into third place, one point ahead of Lazio who were thrashed 3-0 at home by AS Roma. Another Argentinian, Abel Balbo, started the rot with a second-minute opener and Lazio's afternoon was ruined still further by crowd violence that saw four policemen hurt.

Juventus stayed in second spot, one point behind Inter but with a game in hand, after a 2-1 win at Padova.

Their goals came from Roberto Baggio, who found the net in the 30th minute but who went off injured early in the second half, and Fabrizio Ravanelli.

In Spain, Zamorano fired

ca, Bergkamp or Cantona but since then he has proved his extraordinary talent in front of goal. He's been highly professional and worked hard to get back to his best."

Deportivo's win was sealed by former Barcelona player Julio Salinas, who grabbed two late goals in the 70th and 72nd minutes.

Zaragoza, who went to the top of the table last week, lost 1-0 away to fifth-placed Athletic Bilbao courtesy of a Julien Guerrero goal and are now one point off the pace on 17.

Barcelona, point in mid-week in the Champions League by Galatasaray, this time went down to eighth-



Florentina's Argentinian striker Gabriel Batistuta jubilates after scoring a goal. He has scored in every game of the season breaking the previous record set in 1963 (AFP photo)

placed Seville to stay on 16 points. Croatian Davor Suker scored the all-important goal in the seventh minute.

Exciting Nantes kept their unbeaten record intact in the final match of the first-half of the French season and beat Cannes 1-0.

With 19 matches gone Nantes now have 41 points and are six points clear of nearest rivals Paris St. Germain.

Fresh from their superb 4-1 victory over Swiss club FC Sion in a midweek UEFA Cup tie, Nantes secured three points in the 68th minute with a goal from striker Patrice Loko — the league's leading scorer with 12 goals.

Paris St. Germain, who have been unable to reproduce their remarkable European Cup form in the domestic league, dropped a point in the leadership chase. They were held 0-0 at home by Bordeaux and now have 35 points from 19 matches.

Lyon made no mistakes at home to Martigues with a 3-0 victory and goals from Frank Gava, Florian Maurice and Stephans Roche enabled them to move on to 33 points.

Auxerre hammered visiting Sochaux 4-0 with two goals in each half and at the other end of the table, Montpellier stayed bottom but forced a promising 2-2 draw at Rennes.

Meanwhile Bastia could face a home ground ban after a pitch invasion and mass brawl interrupted Saturday night's 2-2 draw with visitors Monaco.

Dozens of Bastia fans attacked referee Antoine de Pandis, a linesman and several Monaco players after a goal was disallowed and a penalty turned down, delaying the game for 20 minutes.

"Some went for me and some went for the linesman," said de Pandis. "My shirt was torn and some Monaco players were attacked. The only thing we could do was to take refuge in the changing room."

Jacques Thebaud, director general of the French Football League, said a disciplinary commission would rule on the incident on Thursday, adding: "Bastia still risk being banned from playing at home, even though the match was re-started."

Basketball Championship Jazireh meet Jalil today in battle for 3rd place

By Aileen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — As the final round of the First Division Basketball Championship enters its second week, two of the three matches lined up for Tuesday will give a somewhat clear indicator of most teams' final standings as the competition nears its end on Dec. 15.

In the most heated match, Al Jalil and Al Jazireh will clash at the Sports Palace in the battle for third place.

Al Jazireh had won their first round encounter 73-69, therefore Al Jalil will have to win by a margin of over four points to take third place which they last held in 1991, before losing it to Al Jazireh.

In an earlier match Al Watani and Homentmen will play for their places in the first division. Al Watani had won their first round encounter 74-49. They will have to repeat the win and overcome Al Hussein by 4 points to avoid relegation.

Homentmen are technically relegated after failing to score the minimum number of wins. However they will be officially relegated if they lose the match. Their slim chance of avoiding relegation comes only in the event of defeating Al Watani by 26 points and Al Hussein by 14 points, a difficult feat to achieve.

In the third match of the day, Al Hussein take on Al Ahli in Irbid.

The titleholders enter the match with an unbeaten streak atop the standings after scoring a 79-70 win over former champions Al Orthodoxy in the first round final.

The match will provide a good rehearsal for Al Ahli to test their players and

tactics. Al Ahli had won their first round encounter 119-54.

As this year's competition rules stipulate that two teams will be relegated, Al Hussein are also in danger of losing their place. They will thus need to repeat their wins over Homentmen and Al Watani to avoid relegation.

However Al Hussein are in a more secure position after overcoming Homentmen 67-54 and pushing Al Watani to the brink of relegation after a crucial 79-76 win.

During the opening matches of the second round Al Jazireh scored their first win over the 100-point mark when they overcame Al Watani 125-87, (the first round score was 91-68).

In other matches, Al Orthodoxy beat Al Hussein 107-59 (first round 99-38), while Al Ahli defeated Homentmen 137-43 (first round 135-26).

Al Jazireh's big win over Al Watani showed that the team was steadily altering their playing tactics, concentrating on attack.

Al Jazireh took a 17-0 lead before Al Watani could score four minutes into the first half which Al Jazireh won 65-30.

Al Watani, joined by

their veteran teammate Ihab Safri for the first time this season, managed to narrow the gap at the beginning of the second half, but Al Jazireh expanded their lead in the final three minutes from 108-77 to end the match 125-87.

Al Jazireh who had ambitions for second place this year lost to Al Orthodoxy 92-75 in the first round, they will therefore need to score an 18 point win in their encounter on Dec. 2.

In another match, Al Ahli scored an easy victory over Homentmen whose undermanned team managed a better score than their first encounter.

The titleholders won the first half 59-24 as both teams' bench players got a shot at the action.

In the third match, Al Orthodoxy's players also had a chance to test their skills against Al Hussein.

The former champions won the first half 59-29 relying on press defence and played a faster game which would prove to be more successful especially when they meet their all-time rivals in the final. Al Orthodoxy will have to score a 10 point win over Al Ahli to force a best-of-three round to determine the winner.

Tuesday's matches

Hussein-Ahli 5:30 p.m. Irbid
Watani-Homentmen 5:30 p.m. Sports Palace.
Jalil-Jazireh 7 p.m. Sports Palace.

STANDINGS

	P	W	L	SF	SA	Pts.
Ahli	7	7	—	786	391	14
Orthodoxy	7	6	1	665	410	13
Jazireh	7	5	2	614	541	12
Jalil	6	3	3	465	426	9
Hussein	7	2	5	423	626	9
Watani	7	1	6	503	670	8
Homentmen	7	—	7	322	718	7

Seville bids for 1999 World Athletics Championships

BARCELONA (R) — Seville has formally applied to host the 1999 World Athletics Championships in anticipation of a possible bid for the 2004 Olympics.

Officials from the southern Spanish city made their pitch on Sunday at the start of an international Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) council meeting.

After the boom of Expo '92 Seville now boasts world-class roads, hotels and media outlets, city officials told the council.

The city has a high-speed rail link to Madrid, a new international airport and two major Spanish television stations.

"We have made a lot of progress in the last 10 years," said Miguel Angel Pino, who heads Seville's championship candidacy.

Seville is the first city to apply for the 1999 Championships. Paris, Manchester, Athens and Johannesburg are also expected to bid but have not formally applied.

A deadline has not yet been set but IAAF officials hope to keep bidding open until the end of next year.

The IAAF championships, held every two years, rank as the largest global sporting event after the Olympics and the soccer World Cup. The Games go to Gothenburg in 1995 and Mexico City in 1997.

Seville wants the 1999 championships partly to prove it can handle the Olympics, says Carlos Fucina, Seville's promotion coordinator.

The games would also give a badly needed economic boost to Andalusia, hard hit by Spain's chronic unemployment. The two week championships would lure 150,000 visitors and 2,000 athletes from 150 countries.

Lucrative television contracts also favour a European site as Eurovision's four-year \$91 million contract is the IAAF's biggest source of revenue.

If Seville wins the 1999 championships it would add to Spain's impressive sporting lineup in the 1990's.

The city hosted the World Indoor Athletics Championships in 1991. Barcelona took the 1992 Olympic Games and has the Indoor Championships next year.

Amateur sumo ready to take on Olympics

TOKYO (AP) — Winning over the world audience won't be easy. It may even take a major change in fashion. Like wearing underpants.

But, never one to shy away from a good fight, Japan's Amateur Sumo Federation has embarked on a campaign to conquer the globe, and officials say making it to the Olympics is simply a matter of time.

"We're in no hurry," Hideshige Tanaka, head of the International Sumo Federation's Sports Development Department and a member of the Japan Olympic Committee, said Monday.

As proof of sumo's growing popularity abroad, Tanaka said 37 countries are signed up to compete in the sport's third world championships in Tokyo on Dec. 11.

Aspiring wrestlers representing everywhere from Argentina to Zambia will duel in light, middle and heavyweight divisions and also fight for overall team honours.

Sumo, which involves two wrestlers pairing off in a raised ring made of tightly packed dirt, has its roots in ancient religious ceremony.

But it has become one of Japan's most popular professional sports.

An American, Chad Rowan of Hawaii, currently holds the professional ranks' exalted position of "Yokozuna," or Grand Champion, and two other Americans have made it to "Ozeki," or champion.

The object of sumo is to topple one's opponent or force him out of the ring, and most bouts take just a few seconds to complete. The sport's leg sweeps and body throws often resemble those of judo — a Japanese invention that has become an Olympic standby.

Traditionally, wrestlers wear only a loincloth and thick belt in the ring. Tanaka said, however, that the amateur federation is willing to sanction short, tight-fitting pants to be worn under wrestlers' belts in international competitions.

"We would be willing to do that," he said. "But that's all the uniform changes we are considering."

Many foreign wrestlers at last year's championships, in fact, wore briefs under their belts. None of the Japanese wrestlers did.

IAAF reinstates U.S. hurdler

BARCELONA (AP) — American hurdler Danny Harris, who has served nearly three years of a four-year ban for cocaine use, was reinstated Sunday by world track's governing body.

Harris was reinstated under the "exceptional circumstances" rule by a unanimous vote at a council meeting of the International Amateur Athletic Federation. It marked the first time the rule had ever been used by the council.

The council ruled on the basis that Harris had kicked his habit and rehabilitated himself fully. The reinstatement is effective immediately.

Harris, who ended Edwin Moses' 122-race winning streak in 1987 and won an Olympic silver medal in 1984, tested positive for cocaine in February 1992 and was suspended for four years.

Chiefs, Vikings and Eagles lose again

The Associated Press

ON THE WAY to the NFL playoffs, Kansas City, Minnesota and Philadelphia forgot to win in November, and the results could be costly when it comes time to figure out division champions and wild cards.

On Sunday, the Chiefs, Vikings and Eagles all lost again, giving the trio a combined 1-8 record the past three weeks. And here's a twist: They all got beat by field goals indoors.

At the Kingdome, John Kasay kicked a 32-yard field goal with 1:42 left to lift Seattle to a 10-9 victory over the Chiefs (7-5), who lost Joe Montana to a sprained left foot in the third quarter. The loss put Kansas City two games behind first-place San Diego in the AFC West.

Montana's status is unknown. At the Metrodome, the Vikings (7-5) lost their third straight when Eric Guliford botched a punt, Tampa Bay recovered and Michael Husted kicked a 22-yard field

goal 2:08 into OT for a 20-17 win.

The Vikings trail Chicago by a game in the NFC Central, and the teams meet Thursday night at Minneapolis.

At the Georgia Dome, the Eagles (7-5) lost their third straight despite two TDs by Herschel Walker, one a 91-yarder. Jeff George threw for 364 yards and two TDs to Terance Mathis in Atlanta's 28-21 victory.

In other games, it was: Miami 28, New York Jets 24; New England 12, Indianapolis 10; Cleveland 34, Houston 10; Pittsburgh 21, Los Angeles Raiders 3; Chicago 19, Arizona 16 in overtime; Denver 15, Cincinnati 13; San Diego 31, Los Angeles Rams 17; and the New York Giants 21, Washington 19.

On Thursday, Dallas beat Green Bay 42-31 and Detroit defeated Buffalo 35-21. Seahawks 10, Chiefs 9. With Montana's left foot being X-rayed, Seattle (5-7) scored 10 fourth-quarter points to steal a win. Steve

Smith scored on a 2-yard run early in the fourth before Kasay kicked the winning field goal.

Kansas City had gone ahead 9-7 when Montana's backup, Steve Bono, engineered a 52-yard, 11-play drive that positioned Lin Elliott for a 38-yard field goal with 7:27 left.

Montana, who had 163 yards passing before his injury, became the fifth NFL quarterback to surpass 40,000 career yards.

Buccaneers 20, Vikings 17, OT. Husted's winning kick ended a six-game losing streak for Tampa Bay (3-9).

The winning play was set up when one of Guliford's teammates ran into him and caused a fumble that was recovered by Ed Brady at the Minnesota 4.

The Vikings (7-5) needed Warren Moon's 40-yard touchdown pass to Ismail with 1:27 left and a 2-point conversion to force OT.

★ Falcons 28, Eagles 21

The play of George and Mathis offset Walker's 91-yard run to tie, the NFL's longest from scrimmage since Bo Jackson went 92 yards five years ago.

The Eagles (7-5) moved within a touchdown on Walker's 2-yard score with 4:22 left, but the game ended with Philadelphia at the Atlanta 19. Unable to get another play off after a 61-yard completion from Randall Cunningham (19 of 36, 248 yards) to Victor Bailey.

★ Dolphins 28, Jets 24

At East Rutherford, N.J., Dan Marino threw four second-half TDs to mark Ingram — the final one from 8 yards with 22 seconds left — to give Miami (8-4) a two-game lead in the AFC East.

On the winning play, Marino looked as if he was going to spike the ball to stop the clock, but instead dropped back and hit Ingram in the end zone as the Jets (6-6) were caught unprepared. Defender Aaron Glenn had his back to the play.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
A TARIK HIRSH
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DOING THE IMPOSSIBLE

Both vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
♠ 4
♥ 10 9 7 5 2
♦ A Q J 10
♣ A 3 2

SOUTH
♠ 10 5 4 3
♥ K Q J 10
♦ K J
♣ K 6 4 3

THE BIDDING

South West North East
1 ♣ Pass 3 ♣ 3 ♣
Pass 5 ♣ Pass 6 ♣
Pass Pass Pass

Opening lead: Jack of ♠

If you can get that declarer, left to his own devices, is about to fulfill the contract, do what you can to give the enemy an option to self-destruct. Here's a classic example of the possibilities that exist.

North's hand doesn't measure up to a jump shift by our standards — neither the diamond suit nor the heart fit is good enough to suggest a

slam would be playable. However, there is no denying the final contract was a good one and would have been unbeatable had trump been five spades, of course, we're forcing South cannot be blamed for rebidding a seven-card suit.

West led the jack of spades, ruffed in dummy. The ace of hearts, East cashed and declarer received the bad news. It might seem declarer now would have to take the club finesse and the losing diamond would go away on a high club. However, East realized the club suit would be a boon to declarer even if West held the king, so when at trick three declarer led a low diamond from the table, an extra chance many players would miss. East produced the king.

In with the ace of diamonds, declarer saw no need to take the "risky" club finesse when there was a "sure thing" in diamonds. After taking the "marked" finesse of the ten with the card West "had" to hold and cashed the high trump for a one-trick set.

Would you, as South, have done anything else?

Schneider gets 52nd world cup win

PARK CITY, Utah (R) — Vreni Schneider gave herself a belated birthday present Sunday, winning the world cup season's opening slalom for the 52nd victory of her illustrious career.

Schneider, who turned 30 while finishing third in giant slalom the previous day, earned a \$18,000 bonus for the best combined result of the weekend and a total of \$38,000.

Making another of her famous second-run comebacks, she posted a time of 1:39.95 to lead a 1-2 Swiss sweep. Martina Accola was second in 1:40.58, the best result of her career.

Kristina Andersson of Sweden was third in 1:40.67, but it was her heralded teammate, Pernilla Wiberg, who held the key to the race.

Wiberg, runner-up to Schneider for the world cup overall title last season, held a commanding lead starting the final run but made a critical error near the finish and wound up fourth in 1:40.70.

French teammate Patricia Chauvet and Beatrice Fiolli tied for fifth at 1:40.95.

Schneider, who confessed to a bit of lethargy on the first run that left her a full second behind Wiberg, then turned on the jets as she so often has done.

"I skied with power, I made the attack," Schneider said of an old-fashioned strategy which left her only 10 victories behind the all-time women's record of Austrian Annemarie Moser-Proell, a mark she says she cannot match.

"It is too many. I'll be lucky to win three or four

"I got far back and my skis made a V, then I almost missed the last gate," Wiberg said in explanation of an error that came within hailing distance of the finish line. "I'm lucky to make it down at all."

In her first race since a season-ending knee injury last March, Wiberg crashed in giant slalom Saturday and had to overcome the early-season jitters that plagued so many of the racers, particularly on the first slalom run.

Confounded by a course set by Swedish coach Gottfrid Trinkl that lacked the rhythm to which they are accustomed, racers fell like bowling pins on a steep course with hard-packed snow.

Thirty-one racers left that first course. Only one of 30 racers crashed on the second run.

The women's tour next goes to Vail for a downhill race on Friday, followed by a Super G and giant slalom. Snow and course conditions are excellent at the Colorado resort.

ALPINE SKIING

more races," said Schneider, who contemplated retirement last spring because of a lingering knee injury.

Now, after an auspicious start that has given her 160 points in defence of her world cup overall title, she may have to rethink the programme.

"It is good beginning, but the season is very long. I will try my best to do it," Schneider said.

She might not have won Sunday if Wiberg hadn't made her fateful mistake.

Pistons, Suns win; Drexler leads Blazers

AUBURN HILLS, Michigan (R) — The hot-and-cold Golden State Warriors were mostly cold with one torrid quarter on Sunday, losing to the Detroit Pistons 106-91 for their fourth defeat in a row.

Joe Dumars scored 21 points, including eight in a fourth-quarter surge, and Grant Hill also scored 21 to lead Detroit.

The Pistons raced a 14-point halftime lead as the Warriors shot just 35 per cent. Golden State scored only 15 points in the first quarter.

The Pistons extended their advantage to as many as 21 points in the third quarter at 60-39. But soon Golden State erupted for 43 third-quarter points and a 31-8 run, cutting the lead to four points going into the final period at 78-74.

Golden State fired in a franchise-record seven 3-pointers in the third period. The Warriors hit on 18-of-26 from the field in the quarter and made 7-of-11 3-pointers after going without a trey in their previous nine attempts.

But as hot as the Warriors were in the third quarter, they were cold in the fourth. The Pistons tore off on a 24-5 run to start the period thanks to some frigid shooting by Golden State.

The Warriors missed 10 of their first 11 shots from the

field and seven of their first 10 free throws.

Golden State was outscored 32-13 in the final period and was held under 100 points for the fourth straight time after hitting that mark in its first eight games.

"In our first eight games we played great. But in the last four we've been terrible," said Hardaway. "It will feel good to go home."

Golden State was paced by Hardaway, who scored 19 points and Gugliotta, who had 18 points and 13 rebounds.

Terry Mills had 20 points for Detroit and added 13 rebounds.

In Phoenix, Danny Manning and Elliot Perry each scored six points with less than four minutes left to lift the Suns to a 115-110 win over the New Jersey Nets.

Wesley Person had a career-high 26 points and Dan Majerle also scored 26 to lead Phoenix to its third straight win and seventh in eight games.

Derrick Coleman had a game-high 30 points and Kenny Anderson finished with 27 points for New Jersey.

The Suns played without all-star Charles Barkley, who has been suffering from an abdominal strain. Barkley saw his first action of the

season Saturday after missing 10 games.

In Portland, Clyde Drexler scored nine of his 15 points in the fourth quarter, including four during a decisive run early in the final period, to help the Trail Blazers to a 99-89 win over the Indiana Pacers.

Clifford Robinson led Portland with 17 points and Buck Williams added 16. Drexler had eight assists and the Trail Blazers held a 42-30 rebounding advantage, while Indiana committed 23 turnovers.

Indiana, which had a four-game winning streak halted, was led by Reggie Miller's 20 points. Rik Smits added 19.

In Sacramento, Kai Malone had 25 points and 14 rebounds to lead the Utah Jazz to their fourth straight win, 94-89 over the Kings.

Jeff Hornacek added 19 points for Utah, helping to overcome John Stockton's two-point, six-turnover performance. Stockton was 1-of-8 from the field, while Hornacek was 7-of-9.

Mitch Richmond scored 25 points for Sacramento, but was 9-of-24 from the field, including 0-of-9 from 3-point range.

World Weightlifting Championships

Crowd misbehaviour, drug rumours mar competition
Ex-Soviets dominate as Russia crowned champions

ISTANBUL (AP) — Crowd misbehaviour. Rumours of secret deals. Doping concerns. One-sided women's competitions.

Even the head of the International Weightlifting Federation admitted things did not go according to plan at the sport's World Championships, which came to a close Sunday after a 10-day run.

"This certainly cannot be considered the championship tournament of the century," IWF President Gottfried Schoddi said.

Hopes were high before the championships began. Gottfried was praising Turkey as a "weightlifting country that stands behind and supports its weightlifters."

That turned out to be one of the problems.

The Turkish fans were over-exuberant. Schoddi and other IWF officials were embarrassed as the home spectators regularly jeered and booed the Armenian, Bulgarian and Greek lifters.

"If the IWF had a fair-play prize, it would never go to Turkey or the Turkish Weightlifting Federation," Schoddi said. "I expected fanatics, but what I didn't expect was political demonstration."

And that will do little for Istanbul's world standing in sports. Schoddi's report to the International Olympic Committee will likely be of no help to the city when it bids for the 2004 Games.

Ethical questions regarding a convicted felon's participation in the championships brought down another notch.

Angel Genchev of Bulgaria was given a furlough in order to represent his country in the 70-kg (154-pound) category and won a silver medal.

"There were no promises of early release if I did well," Genchev said. "Besides, I will be paroled at the end of the year, anyway."

Both Schoddi and IWF secretary-general Tamas Ajan denied any knowledge of Genchev's conviction. But Schoddi conceded that Genchev was stripped of his medals after testing positive for banned substances at the 1988 Seoul Olympics.

Midway through the



Turkey's Naim Suleymanoglu holds up the World Weightlifting Championship in Istanbul. 182.5 kilograms jerk weight during the bul (AFP photo)

tournament, IWF officials were kept busy denying rumors and were distressed by the lack of spectators on days in which there were no Turkish competitors.

Rumours surfaced about an alleged agreement between the IWF and the Chinese, which reportedly limited Chinese women to participation in only six of the nine weight categories.

"I've never heard of such an agreement between the IWF and the Chinese," Ajan said. "But such an agreement is not necessary since they (the Chinese Weightlifting Federation) are aware that the IOC does not approve of any one country entirely dominating any one sport."

Nevertheless, with three golds on offer in each category, the Chinese women went on to have a perfect championship — winning all 18 possible golds in the events they did enter. World-record lifts by the Chinese were more routine than extraordinary.

Schoddi refused to comment on reports about three members of the Ukrainian team testing positive for steroids just one month before the championships. The reports said the lifters were allowed to compete after a \$150,000 fine was paid.

Toward the end of the tournament, when rumours about Chinese women were

running dry, grumblings about naturalised weightlifters began the talk of the championships — Bulgarians competing for Turkey, Russians and Georgians competing for Greece and even an Armenian competing for Turkmenistan.

Schoddi said the changes of national colours were good for weightlifting.

"Before, the sport was dominated by Russians and Bulgarians, but now that some competitors are emigrating from their original countries, it means that weightlifting is also crossing national borders," Schoddi said.

On the plus side, there were some spectacular, tension-packed battles replete with psychological warfare and strategic blunders.

The duels between Turkey's Halil Mutlu and Ivan Ivanov of Bulgaria, and Naim Suleymanoglu, also of Turkey, and Valerios Leonidis of Greece will go down as two of the greatest in the history of the sport.

But they were overshadowed. All things considered, the 1994 World Weightlifting Championships will not be remembered as one of the greatest.

"Maybe next year's will be," Schoddi said. Next year the championships will be held in China.

superheavyweight total of 457.5 kg and gave proof that his winning days are not yet over.

22-year-old Russian Andrei Chemerkin's solitary jerk record of 252.5 kg was not enough to give him even one gold as Kurlovich swiftly overtook it with a jerk of 253.0 kg.

The 151.1 kg, pot-bellied Russian giant failed to hoist 260 kg at his final jerk attempt, and the crown of "strongest man in the world" belonged to Kurlovich.

"The best I had done in training was 240 in the jerk," said Chemerkin, who resembles a close-cropped soccer hooligan.

Kurlovich, now four-times world champion and owner of two Olympic medals, says he does not know if he will be around to defend his Olympic title in Atlanta.

"But it sure would be good if I could," he added. But Chemerkin surely will, to continue the dominance of the ex-Soviets in the glamour class of weightlifting.

The former Soviets have for decades enjoyed a virtual monopoly in the super-heavyweight category, merely passing world and Olympic medals from one of its lifters to the next.

The exception came last year, with German Ronny Weller taking gold at the worlds, but he was out this year with injury and the title returned 'home'.

Australian Stefan Botev, the former Bulgarian star, took bronze in his new category with 435.0 kg.

He moved up from the 108 kg class but said he is simply too small at his relatively light 119.48 kg.

Russia came first in the team events with 354 points to second-placed Turkey's 337. Bulgaria were just one point behind on 336 points.

Final team standings

Women	Points	Men	Points
1. China	369	1. Russia	354
2. Taiwan	325	2. Turkey	337
3. Greece	262	3. Bulgaria	336
4. Bulgaria	255	4. Ukraine	276
5. U.S.	240	5. Belarus	254
6. Russia	191	6. Armenia	224
7. Turkey	139	7. Germany	221
8. Hungary	128	8. Greece	215
9. Thailand	124	9. China	182
10. Canada	94	10. Poland	141



Saatchi & Saatchi Advertising/BD&A launches its operations in Jordan

SINCE FIVE years Saatchi and Saatchi Advertising Worldwide who has been constantly demonstrating its confidence and its commitments to the Middle East by inaugurating fully serviced agencies first in Cairo and in Jeddah in 1989, and later in Dubai and Lebanon in 1992, followed by Riyadh in 1994 with overwhelming success, has announced the launch of its operations in Jordan starting 17th Nov. 1994.

SA/BD&A Amman will be the first International Advertising Agency to establish its office in Jordan (in partnership with V.P.F.G. etc.) and by doing so, it is reiterating the Middle East network commitment to provide its global services to its international, regional and local clients, as well as to the booming advertising industry in Jordan.

Mr. Paul Sader has been appointed as the Managing Director of this new office currently located at Commercial Area of Shmeisani.

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Cinema	Tel.: 634144	Cinema	Tel.: 699238	Cinema	Tel.: 677420	Tel.: 618274 - 618275	Tel.: 675571	Tel.: 625155
PHILADELPHIA		PLAZA		CONCORD		AMMOUN THEATRE	Nabil Al Mashini Theatre	Nabil & Hisham's AHLAN THEATRE
The film which won seven Oscars IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:45		David Bradley in Cyborg Cop Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 5:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30		CONCORD "1" Tom Hanks ... in Sleepless in Seattle Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:00, 8:15, 10:30 CONCORD "2" Sister Act Shows: 3:15, 5:15		Sharon Stone & Richard Gere in Intersection Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30 The family & children play "Water is a gift of life" 10:00 a.m.	Thursday...Thursday 1.12.1994 You have a date with Abu Awad at the opening of the new performance of the comedy: A Punctured Bag (Qirbeh Makhzouqa) Ticket window is open all day	Presents: The political satire: Al Salam Ya Salam Daily at 8:30 Saturday & Sunday is the theatre's holiday. In English next Saturday and Sunday



BOMBAY PARALYSED: Members of the local opposition party, Shiv Sena, stop a train in central Bombay on Monday. Supporters of the party also burned vehicles during a crippling general strike to protest the deaths of

nearly 130 tribals during a stampede triggered by a police baton charge. Police reported dozens of arrests as sporadic violence broke out (see page 4) (AFP photo)

Afghan security forces continue Kabul cleanup

KABUL (AFP) — Troops patrolled the streets of Kabul Monday checking vehicle ownership and confiscating fireworks collected illegally, in a move to make the Afghan capital safer for citizens and property.

"No one has the right to sell or purchase state property or the timbers, windows and doors collected from the ruins of people's houses," explained a garrison officer.

Two military trucks were seen fully loaded with wooden roofing beams, windows and doors which troops had confiscated from the wood merchants in the north-western part of the city.

"Our action has been taken according to a decision of the Kabul Security Commission," said one of the garrison troops searching wood depots for illegal supplies.

Announcements have been made on Radio Kabul over the last week warning citizens that the trade in house timbers must stop.

In the current fighting between rival Afghan factions, which has continued on and off since January, tens of thousands of civilians have been forced out of their homes due to incessant rocket barrages and shifting front lines, which gobble up residential areas, turning them into wastelands.

As soon as there is a lull in the fighting, scavengers, often gangs of children as young as five years old, plunder the ruins for anything combustible to use as fuel.

With winter fast approaching, firewood obtained from derelict homes comes cheaper than buying

supplies from the bazaar, where only the rich can afford prices inflated by the economic blockade imposed on Kabul by factions fighting President Burhanuddin Rabbani.

Garrison troops have also been seen stopping vehicles and checking for ownership papers. In one case at an east Kabul intersection, security troops cordoned-off the street and trained their heavy machine guns on an offending driver who was forced to surrender his car keys.

Garrison troops were also seen arbitrating a dispute between a petrol seller and a tax-driver Monday — the seller had welded a false bottom inside a 20-litre canister so it contained only the short measure of 15 litres.

Although there is no established linkage, the Kabul cleanup operation by Mr. Rabbani's garrison forces coincides with the provincial cleanup operation by the forces of religious students known as Talebha.

The Talebha, who recently cleared illicit check-posts collecting tolls on the national highway from the Pakistan border to the southern provincial capital Kandahar, are still a mystery force.

However, a Defence Ministry official said the Talebha — despite intense debate over who is backing them — were generally well received in Afghanistan so far, because they were perceived as pious Muslims campaigning against corruption.

"The Talebha are actually doing the work of the state by improving security on national highways," the Defence Ministry official said.

Egyptian clerics, Gulf urge action in Bosnia

CAIRO (Agencies) — Egypt's highest Sunni Muslim authority on Sunday accused the United Nations and European countries of "cowardice" for failing to stop Serb attacks on Bosnian Muslims, the official news agency MENA reported.

Sheikh Gad Al Haq Ali Gad Al Haq, imam of Al Azhar, condemned "the cowardly attitude of the U.N. and the laxity of European countries which are not acting to end Serb aggression against the Muslims" of Bosnia.

He stressed the need to do everything possible "to recover the rights of the (Bosnian) Muslims."

Kuwait called Sunday for urgent international action to halt "Serb aggression" against Bihac in northwestern Bosnia, the official Kuwaiti News Agency (KUNA) reported.

The Kuwaiti cabinet expressed its "grave concern" at attacks on Bosnian Muslims after its weekly meeting, and urged the international community to "use all means likely to end the tragedy of the Bosnian people."

The U.N. Security Council on Saturday demanded that Bosnian Serb forces withdraw from the Bihac safe area, a Muslim enclave which has been under attack for a week.

Gulf Arab newspapers slammed the West and the United Nations over the Serb offensive on Bihac, with some urging the Islamic world to act and others accusing the West of conspiring with the Serbs.

"The United Nations bears responsibility for what is hap-

pening now in Bosnia," said Saudi Arabia's Al Yawm daily.

"Europeans are trying to cover up their weak positions by pushing for an agenda of a peaceful solution, which is a losing agenda, the United States condemns the atrocities by the Serbs without taking action, and the Western conscience is dormant."

"The Islamic Nation should rise... to find ways to help the Bosnian people keep their identity... and give them the means for self-defence," Al Yawm said.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) Al Khaleej said: "The stark realities on the ground show what looks like a conspiracy — if not indeed a conspiracy — between the Serbs and the West."

"Looking back at the Western policies... shows that the only result of this policy has been to provide a cover and protection for the Serbs to give them time to carry out their plans."

"UAE's Al Ittihad daily said: 'Where is the world's conscience on what is happening in Bosnia? Human rights is a hollow slogan in the face of the massacres.'"

The English-language Gulf News said: "Bosnia is not a European problem, nor is it an Islamic one. It is an international situation that tests the abilities of the Western alliance, which claims the moral high ground in the new world order... in Bihac, it failed."

Emirates News said: "For God's sake, how much longer will the suffering of the people of Bosnia be permitted to continue?"

Queen Beatrix, Prince Claus begin state visit on Dec. 6

By Cathy King
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — At the invitation of His Majesty King Hussein, Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands and her husband His Royal Highness Prince Claus will visit Jordan early next month on official visit to further strengthen bilateral ties.

"Relations between Jordan and the Netherlands have always been good," said Netherlands Honorary Consul General to Jordan Raouf Abu Jaber.

Ties between the two royal families date back to the days of Queen Juliana, who abdicated in 1980, and have continued with her daughter and present queen, Queen Beatrix. Dr. Abu Jaber told the Jordan Times.

The friendly relations between the royal families of Jordan and the Netherlands have laid the foundation for good bilateral relations on all fronts: Commercial, diplomatic, culture and technical.

In 1955, Dr. Abu Jaber obtained a license to produce Dutch beer, Amstel, which was marked the first commercial venture between the countries.

In 1960, KLM, the Royal Dutch Airline, was the first international European airline to fly direct to Amman; now KLM has seven daily flights between Am-



Queen Beatrix

man and Amsterdam.

The Jordan Dairy was set up with Dutch technical assistance in 1969.

"Pleasant business relations exist between the two countries especially in the dairy and food industry. Apart from excellent technical assistance provided by Holland, we also import its cheese, butter, milk, maize, potatoes and potato seeds," said Dr. Abu Jaber.

He listed other Dutch imports to the Kingdom as cattle, meat, refined sugar, medicines, feed concentrates, raw plastic material, machinery, furniture and a large amount of second-hand clothing.

In return he said that

Jordan exports green vegetables, domestic plants, rock phosphates and copper. Aluminum is exported for reprocessing.

"In 1993 Dutch exports to Jordan amounted to JD 63 million and Jordanian exports to the Netherlands JD 11 million."

"In 1991, 10,000 tonnes of potash was exported but this exchange of trade has not been maintained. Rock phosphate can also be used for fertilisers which we continue to export," Dr. Abu Jaber said.

Queen Beatrix last visited Jordan in 1978, then as the crown princess.

When King Hussein conducted a working visit to the Netherlands in April 1987, he extended an invitation to the Queen.

In recent months arrangements were proposed and Queen Beatrix is due to arrive on Dec. 6 to spend three days here.

Among those to accompany the queen will be the foreign minister who is expected to hold talks with Jordanian officials.

Dr. Abu Jaber has been the Netherlands' honorary consul for 34 years. The Dutch ambassador in Damascus is his government's representative. Consulate officials say there are no plans to open an embassy in Amman in the near future.

Turkey rejects PKK leader's call for truce and mediation

ANKARA (R) — Kurdish guerrilla leader Abdullah Ocalan called for a ceasefire and international mediation to end separatist insurgency in Turkey, but the government on Monday rejected talks with him.

Mr. Ocalan, known within the outlawed Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) as Apo, presented his proposals to end a decade of conflict that has killed 13,000 people in a letter to world leaders at the weekend.

"In this issue, we are one side, the Turkish state is the other. If the other side is ready, let us immediately stop the war," Mr. Ocalan said in the letter whose contents were published in a pro-Kurdish daily.

"We don't want tens of thousands of innocent people to die."

"Because we are aware that the problem of Kurdistan is more international in nature than any other problem, we believe influential states and/or international organisations can play a major role in finding a solution."

Prime Minister Tansu Ciller, a hardliner on the PKK, told reporters she was not prepared to negotiate with Apo.

"We did not start down this path by taking any terror-

ist as an interlocutor," she said. "Our road is clear, we will continue like this."

Sabah newspaper, a leading Turkish daily, said the Apo letter indicated rebel forces were "concerned" and angling for an amnesty.

Pro-Kurdish daily Ozgur Ulke, where Mr. Ocalan writes a regular column, said the letter was sent to leaders of the United States, Germany, France and Britain, as well as to the United Nations, NATO, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe.

Apo's remarks were the strongest signal so far that the elusive Marxist-Leninist leader, believed based in Syria, was prepared to forego his deadly guerrilla campaign against civilian and military targets for a negotiated settlement.

They also follow an army sweep against PKK forces in eastern Tunceli province, an operation described by one commander as the biggest in modern Turkish history.

Latest reports from Tunceli show the rebels on the defensive but far from vanquished.

"Our stance is one that does not seek the solution in war, but relies on political preferences and believes the

present situation can be overcome by dialogue," Apo wrote.

There is no other problem in the world that necessitates an urgent solution so much."

PKK guerrillas and the security forces are locked in a deadly struggle that has kept the poor, predominantly Kurdish south-eastern provinces in a state of chaos. Turkish officials pledge to "finish" the PKK this year has proved unrealistic.

Estimates put the annual cost to the treasury at about \$7 billion and the ripple-effect of poverty, unrest and human rights abuses — including the torching of Kurdish villages — has strained Ankara's ties to its Western allies.

The letter went further than a similar offer in August to mark the 10th anniversary of the PKK's armed struggle. A ceasefire, declared in March of 1993, lasted two months before rebels ambushed and killed 33 unarmed Turkish soldiers.

The ambush played into the hands of Turkey's hawks, who said the ceasefire was a ploy to regroup after severe losses in November 1992 when Turkish military and Iraqi Kurdish Peshmerga forces attacked PKK bases on the border of northern Iraq.

COLUMN

Police nab gang of bus robbers, rapists

BEIJING (AP) — Two undercover police officers have caught a group of bandits in the act of raping a woman on a long-distance bus in west-central China, an official report said Monday.

The police caught the gang of four young men after a woman who was being attacked by one in the back of the bus screamed for help, the newspaper Guangming Daily said. Official reports indicate that the presence of such roving gangs has made travel by long-distance bus and trains in remote areas of China increasingly dangerous.

The newspaper said the gang members resisted arrest after they saw they outnumbered the police. But when the police fired shots through the windows of the bus in warning and then shot one of them in the leg, the others tried to flee. After capturing all four, the police used the bus to deliver them to a nearby police station, the report said. It said the men had been systematically stopping buses and robbing their passengers. The newspaper Xinmin Evening News, meanwhile, reported that another gang of four armed with electric cattle prods and knives boarded a bus in western Sichuan province and robbed its 40 passengers of some 1,000 yuan (\$118). It said the men also raped one of the female passengers before they were caught by police.

Pope injures finger in car door

VATICAN CITY (R) — Pope John Paul injured the little finger of his right hand when a car door was shut on it, the Vatican said. The accident occurred when the Pope was driven from his apartments inside the Vatican to St. Peter's Basilica, where he celebrated a mass with 30 new cardinals. "This morning, getting out of the car which was driving him to the Vatican basilica for the celebration of the holy mass, the holy father's finger was injured as the door was closed," a Vatican statement said. The Pope wore a white bandage on the tip of his finger as he addressed and blessed pilgrims and tourists from the windows of his apartments overlooking St. Peter's Square after the mass. The Vatican issued a short statement on the minor accident after reporters noticed that the Pope was wearing a bandage.

Works of Deng enter curriculum

BEIJING (R) — Shanghai students, who already must study the thoughts of Karl Marx and Mao Tse-tung, will next year also have to master the theories of China's paramount leader Deng Xiaoping, the official media said. Trial courses in the study of Mr. Deng's works among Shanghai's 130,000 higher education students have been remarkably successful in teaching students of the significance of his economic reforms, the Youth Daily said in an edition received in Beijing Monday. "Study of Deng Xiaoping's collected works... helped towards a more scientific and correct knowledge of perplexing problems (in reform)," the newspaper said. The Shanghai Municipal Department of Education has published a textbook on Mr. Deng's theory and from the start of the 1995 academic year this will be added to the compulsory curriculum for the city's 46 schools of higher education, it said. "It will be a separate part of the grades," it said.

Chinese doctors save panda with sick pancreas

BEIJING (R) — Chinese military doctors have saved the life of an eight-year-old female panda diagnosed as having acute pancreatitis and a severe intestinal obstruction, the Xinhua News Agency said Monday. Rongrong, the first Panda born by artificial insemination at the Fuzhou Zoo in southeastern Fujian province, fell ill on Nov. 15 with a high fever, the agency said. A dozen doctors from the Nanjing Military Area Command Hospital rushed to the zoo on Nov. 1 and took Rongrong to hospital, where it was X-rayed and given an ultrasound examination.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iranian president to boycott OIC meeting

NICOSIA (AP) — Iran's President Hashemi Rafsanjani will boycott a forthcoming Islamic summit in Morocco to protest Rabat's recently established ties with Israel, the Islamic Republic News Agency reported Monday. The state-run agency quoted the Iran news daily as saying it had learned from official sources that Mr. Rafsanjani would stay away from the meeting of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC). IRNA quoted the English-language paper as saying Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati would lead the Iranian delegation to the two-day conference, scheduled to open in Casablanca Dec. 12. The paper said Mr. Rafsanjani's "absence would be a protest against (Morocco's)... submission to Zionist demands while the people of Palestine remaining orphaned from their rightful homeland."

Libyans to discuss Lockerbie in London

TRIPOLI (AFP) — A Libyan delegation is to hold talks on solving the Lockerbie affair during a visit to London this week, a lawyer for the two men indicated over the attack said Monday. Libya has been under an international embargo because it has refused to hand over the men, whom Britain and the United States accuse of planting the bomb which blew up a Pan Am airliner over Lockerbie, Scotland, in December 1988, killing 270 people. Lawyer Ibrahim Legwell said he would be a member of the delegation which had been invited by the House of Commons and would visit within the next two days. "The talks will focus on the ways of finding a solution to the crisis between Libya and the West," he said, without identifying the other members of the delegation.

Rushdie asks EU to use might against Iran

BRUSSELS (R) — British author Salman Rushdie on Monday urged the European Union (EU) to use its financial clout to force Iran to lift an Islamic death sentence on him. "Iran is very vulnerable. It needs (a good EU) relationship," Mr. Rushdie told reporters after meeting a representative group of EU foreign ministers. Mr. Rushdie has been in hiding for six years since the late Iranian leader Ayatollah Khomeini issued a death sentence on him for alleged blasphemy in his novel "Satanic Verses." The author said it was time for the West to stop its condemnations of the fatwah and to impose on Iran something with "deleterious consequences." Iran was one of the few large countries that did not have special economic links with the union, he said.

Sudan to protest Eritrean guerrilla charge

KHARTOUM (R) — Sudan's ministry of foreign affairs will make an official protest to Eritrea over its accusation Sudan has been training guerrillas to undermine it, the Akhbar Al Yom newspaper said on Monday. It said the Foreign Ministry would soon summon the Eritrean ambassador to Sudan to give him the official protest. A statement distributed by the Eritrean embassy in Addis Ababa on Thursday accused the government of Sudan of training over 400 "terrorists" from August this year and said it had just recruited 300 more. Eritrea also denied Khartoum's allegations that it has trained 300 Sudanese opposition forces for similar cross-border operations.

Turks jail Greek pizza delivery man

NICOSIA (AFP) — A Greek pizza delivery man on Monday was sentenced to three days in a Turkish-Cypriot prison after straying across the buffer zone on the divided island of Cyprus. The Turkish-Cypriot news agency TAK, monitored in Ankara, said George Koutsoukoulas was jailed for "infiltrating a military zone." On the other side of the green line dividing the island, the Cyprus News Agency (CNA) said the 24-year-old student from Greece "lost his way" as he was making a delivery on Saturday night. He was trying to deliver a pizza to U.N. peacekeepers who control the buffer zone between Greek and Turkish-Cypriots, it said.

'Prison blunders' in trial of British soldiers

LARNACA (AFP) — A Cyprus court will decide Friday whether to hold a special hearing into demands that charges be dropped against British soldiers accused of killing a Danish tour operator because of prison blunders. The court in the town of Larnaca on Monday heard defence arguments that a fair trial for two of the three defendants in the Louise Jensen manslaughter case was "impossible" after prison guards read confidential evidence. Antonis Andreou, representing Rifleman Jeffrey Pernell, said his constitutional rights had been violated by the blunder. Last week, Mr. Andreou revealed that 11 pages of notes and sketches prepared by Pernell while on remand at Nicosia central prison had been intercepted and read by a guard there. Tassos Katsikides, representing another of the accused, Alan Ford, said a similar incident had occurred with his client. Mr. Andreou, backed by Mr. Katsikides, argued Monday that because of the blunders the chances of a fair trial were "impossible within the framework of the constitution," guaranteeing confidentiality between a lawyer and client.

Canadian jailed in UAE for multi-million dollar AMF scam

ABU DHABI (AFP) — A Canadian convicted in absentia along with four others of embezzling millions of dollars from the Arab Monetary Fund (AMF) nine years ago has been jailed here after being extradited from Lebanon, judicial sources said on Monday.

Mahdi Saleh Bahrululul, a Canadian of Iraqi origin who had lived in Lebanon for several years, was handed over to Abu Dhabi authorities five days ago and locked up immediately to serve his 17-year jail term, the sources said.

He will appear in court on Tuesday after challenging his arrest on the grounds the sentence against him was issued in absentia.

"He has the legal right to object as he could argue he was not officially informed of the sentence," a legal source said.

"But the prosecution could argue the publication of the verdict in the media is considered a formal notification. I expect the court to turn down his objection and jail him."

Mr. Bahrululul was convicted in 1987 along with AMF Chairman Jawad Hashem and three other fund officials of embezzling around \$80 million and were sentenced in absentia on more than 40 charges.

Mr. Hashem, also Canadian of Iraqi origin, was sent

enced to 249 years in prison and the AMF has asked Interpol to bring him back to the UAE. But judicial sources ruled out his return as there is no extradition treaty between the emirates and Canada or Britain, where he owns property.

Last year, the AMF said it won a case against Mr. Hashem in a London court, which found the former Iraqi planning minister, Bahrululul and another defendant, Jalal Stephan, guilty of swindling \$50 million.

It said the defendants were indicted of stealing more than \$18 million of funds held by the AMF or due to the AMF and over \$29 million of the fund's own money to cover losses which they suffered on their own personal dealing in precious metals.

AMF sources said Mr. Hashem, who had served in the Abu Dhabi-based fund between 1980 and 1986, had used the swindled money to invest it abroad, mainly in Britain and Canada and in secret bank accounts in Switzerland.

Sources close to the case said the AMF had so far spent more than \$35 million on legal action to recover the embezzled money.

The AMF, the Arab League's main financial organisation, is also suffering from arrears of more than \$500 million incurred by Iran

Sudan and Somalia over the past decade. The debt has hurt the fund's lending activity as it accounts for around half its paid-up capital.

The fund was set up by the 22-member Arab League in 1976 with the primary goal of helping regional states in tackling persistent balance of payment deficits through soft loans and technical assistance.

Judicial sources said Canada could get involved in the Bahrululul case as he was extradited to the UAE by another country without consulting with it.

Mr. Bahrululul had lived in Lebanon for several years despite AMF attempts to bring him back to the UAE. During the civil strife that ended in 1990, he was under the protection of some warlords there, sources said.

"We express our thanks for the Lebanese authorities for cooperating with UAE in handing over the defendant so he will be punished for his crimes," UAE prosecutor Mohammad Al Dahiri told Al Khaleej newspaper.

Another major financial scandal that hit the UAE was the collapse of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International in 1991 due to massive fraud. Its former top executives are being tried at an appeal court in Abu Dhabi after they were convicted earlier this year.